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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Fifth periodic reports of States parties

Denmark*

* The present report is being issued without formal editing. For the initial report submitted by the Government of Denmark, see CEDAW/C/5/Add.22, considered by the Committee at its fifth session. For the second periodic report submitted by the Government of Denmark, see CEDAW/C/13/Add.14, considered by the Committee at its tenth session. For the third periodic report submitted by the Government of Denmark, see CEDAW/C/DEN/3, considered by the Committee at its sixteenth session. For the fourth periodic report submitted by the Government of Denmark, see CEDAW/C/DEN/4.

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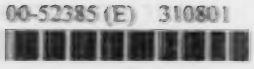

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INTRODUCTION

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly on December 18, 1979, entered into force in Denmark on May 21, 1983.

The responsibility for the implementation of the obligations laid down in the articles of the Convention rests with the government, but could not be accounted for without the participation of the many institutions, organisations, groups, and individuals engaged in the field of gender equality.

According to the rules, Denmark submitted its first report for consideration by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984. The second CEDAW report on the implementation of the Convention was submitted in 1988, the third in early 1993 and the fourth in January 1997.

An examination of the third report took place in New York in January 1997. Developments described in the summary record of the 328th and 329th meetings of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/DEN/3), when the Third Report from Denmark was considered by the Committee, are not repeated in this report. However, concerns and recommendations of the Committee are addressed in the report.

The CEDAW Committee has not yet considered the fourth CEDAW report. It is expected that the fourth and the present fifth report will be examined at the same time. The present report has therefore been structured in more or less the same way as the previous fourth one. Each chapter corresponds to the different parts of the Convention, with the exception of the articles on education and employment, which are discussed in separate chapters. As usual, Danish women's NGOs were invited to comment on the report. As something new also an umbrella organisation for Danish men's organisations has submitted comments. These comments can be found at the end of the report.

The present and fifth report introduces the most important gender issues in the Danish context over the past 3 – 4 years.

CHAPTER 1: THE FRAMEWORK FOR WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY

Article 1

Foundation

Equality between women and men is an overriding objective in Danish policy. The objective for the work of fulfilling this goal is an understanding of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Women and men have the same rights, obligations and opportunities in all areas of society. In principle this involves not only formal equality through legislation, but also the implementation of measures to make sure that gender equality exists in practice.

Since the submission of the previous fourth CEDAW report in December 1996 Denmark has concentrated on strengthening the implementation of gender issues at different levels in the Danish society, not least as part of the follow-up of the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

Article 2

Constitution and Legislation

As mentioned in previous reports, from a legislative point of view hardly any obstacles remain regarding women's equal rights with men.

The Danish Constitution of 1953 contains no provisions dealing specifically with equality of women and men, but it embodies the principle of equal treatment of men and women.

Since 1976 successive governments have continuously worked to enlarge and improve the de jure equality between women and men. Previously five parliamentary acts specifically aimed at promoting equality: acts on equal opportunity, equal pay, equal treatment, equality in appointing members of public committees and in appointing board members of the civil service (ref. Denmark's 4. report).

Three of these acts have now been replaced by the new act on equal treatment between women and men[1]. The acts on equal pay and on equal treatment continue to be in force.

The Constitution and the equality laws require the public sector as well as the private sector to ensure the respect for gender equality. Details on the implementation of the equality acts and other de jure and de facto measures influencing the work for equality will be discussed in the relevant chapters.

Denmark has implemented most of the European Union directives on gender equality in due time, and the government is pursuing an active policy towards achieving equal rights within the EU framework on gender equality.

Denmark has also been implementing the Platform for Action. In 1998 the government reported for the second time to Parliament on the national and international implementation.

Likewise the government has taken measures to implement the CEDAW Convention. In 1999, the UN adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Denmark has been active in negotiations to ensure that individuals or groups of individuals who are victims of a violation of any of the rights set forth in the Convention by that State Party have the right to complain to the CEDAW Committee. Denmark signed the Protocol together with several other countries on 10 December 1999, the UN Human Rights Day. It is expected that the Protocol will be ratified at the latest in June 2000.

The Danish law complex on gender equality is not applicable in the Faroe Islands and Greenland, as equality issues are encompassed by the home rule legislation of the Faroe Islands and Greenland. The Equal Status Committee of the Faroe Islands (established in 1994) aims at strengthening gender equality in the fields of labour, education and culture. – The Greenland Equal Status Council (set up in December 1998) especially addresses gender equality on the labour market and in the areas of education, culture and family life.

[1] The new law was adopted by Parliament 25 May 2000. An English language copy will be forwarded to the CEDAW committee as soon as possible after it has been translated.

Article 3

National Policy

Denmark's national policy on gender equality has been developed in a continuous interaction between the government, Parliament, the Equal Status Council, social partners and the non-governmental organisations.

The Government's Action Plan on Gender Equality

Apart from the legislation, an important step towards full equality between women and men was the adoption of the government's plan of action on gender equality, which was presented to Parliament for the first time in 1987. The overall strategy is to make ministries and other central government organisations act as initiators of and models for future-oriented and operational gender related activities.

About every third year, the Danish government prepares action plans promoting equal status and opportunities in government organisations and institutions. Reference is made to the previous reports concerning the action plan periods: 1987-1990 (first period), 1991-1993 (second period), and 1994-1996 (third period). In December 1996, The Equal Status Council evaluated the latest plan of action. Parliament has decided to postpone a debate on this evaluation pending the ongoing reorganisation of the national institutions for gender equality.

The Minister for Gender Equality will be responsible for preparing annual perspective plans and action plans from the year 2000.

In 1995, Parliament passed an act requiring all municipalities and counties in Denmark to report on their efforts to promote gender equality, every second year. In 1997, the Equal Status Council published the first report on progress in the promotion of gender equality in municipalities. The second report was published in December 1999. Gender statistics from all municipalities were included as well as an evaluation of initiatives and their results. See chapter 4.

Follow-up to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing

As mentioned in the previous report, in April 1996, the government submitted its first report to Parliament on the follow-up to the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing. Parliament

encouraged the government to present a full report on the implementation of the Platform for Action in the 1997/1998 session, and to mainstream a gender perspective in administrative, political and planning activities at the national as well as at the international level.

In May 1998, the government submitted its second report to Parliament on national and international implementation of the Platform for Action from the Fourth UN World Conference on Women. The results are integrated in the present report.

Gender Mainstreaming

The government's gender equality policy is based on the concept of mainstreaming. The Minister for Gender Equality has the immediate responsibility for promoting gender equality while the respective ministers are responsible for ensuring gender equality within their portfolio. Also the aforementioned new act on equal treatment of women and men is very much based on the concept of mainstreaming. All political initiatives, including all labour market Bills, must be assessed to secure gender equality. However, the mainstreaming strategy still needs further operationalisation. Additional methods to mainstream gender are still needed.

The Nordic Council of Ministers in 1997 initiated the Nordic mainstreaming project: a three year 'umbrella project' with different projects in all Nordic countries on gender mainstreaming. It is expected that a final report will be published during 2000. In November 2000 the results will be presented at an international conference on Gender Mainstream in Paris, arranged jointly by the OECD and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Article 4

Equality Bodies and Temporary Measures

As a follow-up to Beijing in March 1996, the government established a committee to consider an "institutional mechanism to promote gender equality". The existing institutions was more than 20 years old and no longer considered adequate. Ministries, trade unions and NGOs constituted the committee.

The committee analysed the problems concerning the existing institutional set up. It stated that the existing body, the Equal Status Council, had been coping with too many and too varied tasks such as judicial complaints, initiation of public debates, administrative support for the Prime Minister, responsibility for gender equality, and an information service for the public.

In March 1999, the committee submitted an extensive report under the title: 'Working towards gender equality'. The report contains approximately 40 themes and topics to promote gender equality in the Danish society and proposals to reorganise existing gender equality institutions into three separate institutions, dividing the previous portfolio in order to strengthen gender equality efforts and enhance visibility.

The report was debated in Parliament in May 1999. Parliament supported the recommendations of the Committee as requested by the government and recommended that the government should

- improve the public administration's ability to mainstream gender
- work for equal pay and pensions
- work for equal gender participation in decision-making in society
- support efforts to improve reconciliation between working life and family life
- produce better information on gender equality issues, including gender statistics
- report on a yearly basis to Parliament on the status of gender equality in society
- abolish the Equal Status Council as recommended by the Committee
- establish a 'Knowledge Centre' on gender equality
- establish a board dealing with complaints on gender discrimination on a two-year trial basis.

Following the debate in Parliament showing broad support, the Prime Minister appointed a Minister for Gender Equality in July 1999 (for the current period also Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs), with the responsibility for promoting gender equality. In line with the mainstreaming strategy all other ministers will still be responsible for securing gender equality within their portfolio.

As a second step the above mentioned new bill was introduced to Parliament in February 2000 and adopted in May 2000. The new law establishes new institutional mechanics on gender equality with the intention to promote equal opportunities between women and men. The principle of gender mainstreaming is included in the legislation, and the ministries will be given the possibility to initiate

actions to promote equality. Every second year, public authorities shall work out statements of the status of equality. The rules are strengthened concerning the composition of public committees and commissions etc. set up by a minister, in order to have more women to take part in decision-making processes in society.

The law follows the proposals put forward by the Committee. The Equal Status Council will be replaced by three new separate bodies. First a departmental unit for the Minister for Gender Equality will be established. In addition to this a knowledge centre and debate forum will be created, with the participation of a broad spectre of NGOs, social partners, researchers, resource persons and so forth. Finally a board of complaints for gender equality with the power to make legally binding decisions (a trial period for 2 years) will be set up. The law aims at incorporating the gender aspect into all policies and parts of administration (in other words mainstreaming) as well as allowing for special measures in specific fields, the so called double strategy.

Parliament has allocated DKK 19.5 million in the budget for the year 2000, which more than doubles the previous amount available for equality work.

The Equal Status Council

Until the new Minister for Gender Equality was appointed in July 1999, the Equal Status Council was the main governmental actor in the field.

The Council had the function of an ombudsman, to ensure that the legal acts were observed. The Council was entitled to give opinions in cases treated under the Equal Treatment Act and the Equal Pay Act, and to grant dispensation from provisions of the Equal Treatment Act. In 1998, the Council received 92 inquiries about concrete cases concerning matters to be dealt with under one of the two acts referred to above. The Equal Status Council processed fifteen cases.

The Council also monitors and promotes equal opportunities for women and men in society. Experience gained has been collected and distributed through various publications, conferences and so forth.

The Council also offers advice on the operation of gender mainstreaming in the public and private sector. Advice offered by the Council covers areas such as the reconciliation of working life and fam-

ily life, problems concerning women managers, or measures that may contribute to provoking changes in the gender-divided labour market.

In order to change attitudes and raise people's awareness of the importance of gender equality, the Council has focused on communication and debate during the last years. Several conferences, hearings and seminars have been initiated and debates have been promoted in the media. Moreover, a web-site at the Internet has been established, giving information on the work and decisions of the Council. Implementation of links to databases on court decisions regarding equal status and debates on gender equality in newspapers and magazines are also included.

Statistics are absolutely necessary to be able to document inequalities between the sexes and to update knowledge. In 1998, The Equal Status Council has worked out an annotated edition of gender statistics to be included in the Council's annual report. Moreover, in December 1999, the Council issued a publication entitled "Women and Men". The publication, which is a follow-up on a similar publication published in 1995, was worked out in co-operation with Statistics Denmark. The statistics show a number of inequalities that have not become any less significant over the years – and which establish a platform for future work, for instance in the fields of equal pay and women in decision-making.

In 1998, the financial contribution to the Council amounted to DKK 7.6 million. The daily work was carried out by a secretariat of fourteen employees, of which six were men.

Denmark endeavours to promote Danish interests in relation to international efforts promoting equality. The international tasks are carried out jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Equal Status Council (now the Office of the Minister for Gender Equality).

Committee on International Equality Affairs

The Committee on International Equality Affairs follows the international gender equality issues in the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the OSCE, and the OECD. Until July 1999 the Prime Minister appointed the Committee. This responsibility has been transferred to the Minister for Gender Equality. The Committee is chaired by a parliamentarian and co-ordinates international gender equality affairs. The Minister of Foreign Affairs hosts the secretariat.

Non-governmental Organisations

There is a long tradition in Denmark that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) take a very active part in the work of obtaining equality between women and men and combating gender discrimination and stereotypes. That is especially true for The National Council of Women in Danmark (the umbrella organisation for 49 women's organisations – and the new name for the former 'Danish National Council of Women') and The Danish Women's Society. These NGOs act as both watchdogs of public initiatives and as active participants in the process of achieving gender equality, including the dissemination of knowledge on the Convention, PFA and national policy.

Co-operating with NGOs is a priority for the Danish government. They were represented in the Equal Status Council, at the Committee on International Equality Affairs, and other committees, and they are regularly involved in national as well as international events. They have also been represented in the Committee on Future Work on Gender Equality and will be represented in the new institutional set-up.

The NGOs participate in the Danish governmental delegation at UN conferences. The Council is also the co-ordinating body of NGO activities relating to the official conferences and meetings.

Temporary Measures

As pointed out in previous reports, special temporary measures to promote gender equality can be taken using the paragraphs of the Act on Equal Treatment. Decisions on the use of temporary special measures must be taken based on the concrete estimates and as part of the overall goal of reaching equality. Details of such measures are to be found in chapters 3 and 4.

Article 5

Priorities

The Danish gender equality policy during the reporting period has focused on the following areas:

Equal Pay and Pensions

An important area concerns eradicating inequalities in women's and men's pay and pensions. Statistics show that, on average, women still earn only 80 per cent of what men earn on the labour market. This situation has not changed in the past years. The narrowing of the pay gap between women and men, during the 1970s and 1980s, seems to have stopped in spite of the Equal Pay Act and other initiatives.

Moreover, women's pension conditions have been a matter of great concern. Women are more likely to have only a basic pension, and differences in incomes between women and men during their occupationally active period are being reflected in the differences in size of pension. (Ref. chapter 4).

Women and Power

In every sector of society today men still hold considerably more decision-making positions than women. Women's participation in public life and in decision-making has been a matter of central concern. In 1997, the government decided to initiate an analysis of power and power relations. The purpose is to explore the political decision-making processes and the power balances in Denmark. The Steering Committee for the report has decided to employ a person to ensure mainstreaming and gender issues. The work of the committee continues until 2003. (Ref. chapter 4).

Violence against Women

Globally an increase in violence against women has been observed with great concern. Consequently, the Danish government as well as Danish NGOs have focused on this issue and initiated a range of projects on domestic violence, prostitution, trafficking in women, circumcision of women. (Ref. chapter 5).

Men and Equality

The role of men is an important element in the ongoing debate on gender equality and new gender roles. The interest in formulating the special problems faced by men and in involving men in work

relating to equal opportunities is increasing. A Nordic plan of action for men and gender equality has been adopted, and new initiatives have been taken as introduction of more flexible leave schemes and special paternal leave. (Ref. chapter 4).

International Co-operation

There has been focus on international co-operation at UN, EU and Nordic level as well as development co-operation with countries in the South. In particular, it has been a priority to continue the follow-up to the UN Platform of Action, according to which the government has reported to Parliament on progress in 1998.

Article 6

Special Issues

The Minister for Gender Equality has taken the initiative to strengthen co-operation with ethnic minority women, among other things to involve them to a higher degree in the democratic decision-making processes. The intention is to elaborate an equality policy, which will have to be formulated on the basis of the special conditions of these women.

With regard to special issues such as gender-based violence, rape, incest, trafficking in women, prostitution, and circumcision, see chapter 5 in the present report.

CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC LIFE

Article 7

Political Rights and Participation

In order to improve gender equality for many years Denmark has focused on women's participation in public life and in the decision-making processes. As mentioned in previous reports, Danish women and men enjoy the same political rights. Both sexes have the right to vote and are eligible for local government and parliament as well as for elections to the European Parliament.

Women are still a minority in many power and decision-making positions. While gender imbalances are most unequal in top management positions in the private sphere, they are almost even in Parliament. Although all legislative obstacles have been removed attitudes must still be changed regarding women's full participation in political life, on public boards, in councils, in commissions and in committees advising on decision-making processes as well as in government services. Many women are reluctant to run for election. Most women still retain the main responsibility for the family and the household, which is difficult to combine with an active political life.

NGOs have been continuously involved in setting the official equal status agenda concerning women in decision-making, and implementing the government's gender equality policy in this area.

In 1997, the government decided to initiate an analysis of power and power relations. The purpose was to explore the political decision-making processes and power balances in Denmark. The Steering Committee responsible for the analysis decided to create a post to ensure mainstreaming of gender issues in the analyses and to have both women and men represented in research management, background groups, etc. The analysis will continue for another three years.

Local Government Bodies

Very few fluctuations in women's participation and success in the elections for local government bodies have been noted during the past few years.

The percentage of elected women were:

Local government elections	1985	1989	1993	1997
	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %
Municipalities	30	26	28	27
Counties	29	29	31	29
Mayors of municipalities	4	9	10	11
Mayors of counties	0	7	21	14

Source: The Equal Status Council's Annual Report, 1998

Following the local government elections in November 1997, The Equal Status Council conducted a survey of the gender balance in political positions in local governments. The proportion of women among elected members of local municipalities was 27 per cent. This implies a small reduction compared with 1993, when the proportion of women was 27.9 per cent. The proportion of women candidates for the elections was 28.5 per cent in 1997, against 29.6 per cent in 1993.

While close to the critical mass, certain stagnation in women's representation in local government elections is prevailing. The nomination for political top posts is noted for a slight increase in the representation of women mayors in municipalities – and a decrease in the representation of women mayors in counties.

To encourage more women to stand for election at local government level, women are granted up to DKK 10,000 a year per child, to offset babysitting expenses incurred when attending meetings. However, much more is needed, including changing attitudes, a change of political climate and the shortening of the long working hours.

Parliamentary Elections

There has been a steady increase in women's representation in parliament – the Danish Folketing. Both in parliament and in the cabinet women's share is now above "the critical mass".

Parliamentary elections	1982-87	1987-88	1988-90	1990-93	1993-94	1994-98	1998-
	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %
Parliament (Folketing)	26	29	31	33	33	33	37
Cabinet	19	14	19	21	33	35	45

Sources: The Equal Status Council's annual report, 1998, and the Danish Folketing, 1999.

Women make up more than 33 per cent of the committees in parliament, and their share have been rather steady from 1990 and onwards. In 1997, they made up 36 percent of the parliamentarian committees, a slight decrease compared to 1996.

Parliamentary Committees	1990	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
	Women In %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %
	27	36	36	37	36	37	37

Source: The Equal Status Council's Annual Report, 1998 and the Danish Folketing, 2000.

Denmark has one of the highest numbers of women MPs compared with the rest of Europe, and in 1998 38 per cent of the members of political parties were women.

Elections for the European Parliament

During the entire reporting period, Danish women's representation in the European Parliament has been rather high. The highest proportion was in 1994 with 44 per cent. From 1995 to 1999 Denmark had a woman Commissioner. In 1999 women's representation in the European Parliament has decreased to 38 per cent (6 women out of 16 members).

Elections for the European Parliament	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999
	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %	Women in %
The European Parliament	33	38	38	44	38
Commissioners	0	0	0	1	0

Source: The Equal Status Council' Annual Report, 1998

Public Councils, Commissions, Committees and Boards

As stated in previous reports, two Acts exist (see Chapter 1 and Annex) influencing the appointment of women to councils, commissions, committees and boards, established at the central or local level in order to advise ministers, mayors, and their administrations. When nominating candidates, both a woman and a man must be proposed. In special cases, when it is clearly unreasonable to expect these requirements to be fulfilled, an exemption may be granted.

The Act on Equality between Men and Women in connection with the Appointment of Members to Public Committees, Commissions etc. has been in effect since July 1985. In 1984 the women's share was 12.7 per cent. In 1996 the women's share had increased to 38.9 per cent in newly appointed committees, which were reported to the Prime Minister's office.[2] In 1998, the women's share was 38 per cent, which is a slightly lower level compared with 1996 and 1997 (38.4 per cent).

The Act on Equal Opportunity between Men and Women regarding the Occupation of Certain Executive Board Positions in the Public Administration has been in effect since July 1990. The aim of the law was to secure a balanced composition of women and men on boards. In this connection 'balanced' means about one third of the under-represented gender. This goal has not quite been reached. In 1990 women's share was 24.1 per cent and in 1994 29.2 per cent. In 1997 it was 26.5 per cent, which was a decrease of close to 3 per cent from 1994.

The Danish legislation in this field actively influences the appointment of women, but statistics show that women are still a minority, and they are especially a minority as members of secretariats of the various bodies and as chairpersons. In order to improve the situation some ministers have refused to

[2] The Equal Status Council has made up the statistics for all committees, i.e. committees, which are not covered by the Act, to 27.2 per cent in 1996.

appoint members from the organisations until they have nominated an equal number of women and men. Other ministers have shortened the appointment period to put pressure on the organisations.

As part of the endeavours to achieve a better gender balance in the composition of government committees and executive committees, the government has announced a white paper, leading to the amendment of the two Acts in question.

Campaigning and other Information Activities

Legislation has proven a successful instrument to increase women's percentage in representation, for instance on committees. Persistency is important when working towards greater equality. Campaigning and information is crucial in order to promote female participation in politics and change of attitudes.

The Equal Status Council has particularly tried to change people's opinions on gender equality. The Council takes advantage of opportunities created by the public debates by commenting on developments in gender issues.

As stated in the previous report, political parties and NGOs disseminate most information in this area. Especially, the Women's Council and the Danish Women's Society are actively involved in influencing the appointment of women to public committees, and of encouraging and preparing women for participation in politics and decision-making in committees and on boards. They run campaigns in connection with each election, and invite women politicians to meetings and seminars both to have more women politicians and to influence public policies at both national and international levels.

Participation in Public Services

Women have the same formal opportunities as men to be appointed to public office.
Women account for a clear majority of public sector employees, however with a clear minority of management positions.

State and Municipalities

In the public administrative system managerial positions are classified in wage groups 36-42. Men occupy a majority of management positions. Male domination grows, as the level of positions becomes higher. From 1983-1996 women's share in management positions in the central government increased from 9 to 20 per cent, and in top management from 3 to 10 per cent during the same period. In 1998, there were no women amongst the 19 permanent secretaries in the ministries. In 1998 11 per cent of Heads of Departments were women.

During the period 1983-96, there has also been an increase in women's share in management in the municipalities from 12 to 20 per cent – and in top management during the same period from 1 to 8 per cent. The share of women municipality directors has increased from 5 per cent in 1990 to approximately 14 per cent in 1998.

Armed Forces

In 1997, the recruitment requirements for personnel volunteering for service in the armed forces were revised. The amendments subsequent to the revision make it possible to increase the number of women recruited for military training. The possibility of individualised physical education and training has increased, which will contribute to enabling more women to complete training with a satisfactory result.

In 2000 the physical training requirements will be revised. The introduction of new physical training requirements is expected to make it possible to increase the number of women recruited for military training further and to make it easier for female military personnel to meet the physical training requirements on duty.

In February 1998, an Act was passed which provides for women to be recruited voluntarily under conditions similar to those applying to ordinary compulsory military service with a view to their becoming part of the armed forces' mobilisation unit on an equal footing with men.

Approximately 5 per cent of today's military personnel are women. The majority of these are private soldiers. Due to the small number of female personnel and the recent entry of women in the armed forces, no women officers were promoted to senior rank until 1999 when the first woman was promoted to Commander Senior Grade.

The armed forces are making efforts towards promoting more women. Female personnel attend the armed forces' management development programmes on an equal footing with male personnel. In addition, female personnel are enrolled in special programmes to promote the appointment of women to higher ranks.

Article 8

Representing the Government

Women have the same right as men to represent the Danish government at the international level.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a staff of almost 2500 employees of which 953 persons work in Copenhagen. In 1999, the number of women made up 45 per cent of all the employees, but to a much higher extent men occupied senior positions. Among the academics, women made up 27 per cent. At senior civil servant level (wage group 36-42) eighteen out of 167 or 11 per cent were women. In the wage group of 40-42 at the very top-management level only 1 out of 9 was a woman.

The ministry published its plan of action 'Equality in the Foreign Service in the Year 2000' in late 1993. The plan has been revised and was ready in April 2000. The figures mentioned above show that gender equality is far from achieved by the year 2000.

Article 9

Citizenship

As stated in previous reports, the Danish Nationality Act is in full accordance with article 9 in the CEDAW Convention.

The 'Aliens Act' regulates the access of foreigners to the country and their residence in Denmark. The Act is gender-neutral.

Refugees' and immigrants' rights to obtain a residence permit and later citizenship have been a live issue in the 1990s. There are different reasons why foreign women come to Denmark (as refugees, for marriage, family reunification, etc.). Also, they arrive from very different countries with different backgrounds. It is important to be aware of each individual's specific situation, and to ensure equality between women and men.

As stated in the previous report, a 'Committee on the integration and legal position of foreign women in Denmark' was established in 1993 under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Committee was assigned the job of examining the rules for granting residence permits and the rules for cancelling residence permits. The Equal Status Council was represented in the Commission. The first part of the Committee's report was published in 1995, which resulted in an amendment of the Aliens Act in May 1996.

With the adoption of the amendment of the Aliens Act regarding residence permits for foreign women subjected to violence, there has been a general improvement in the legal position of this group. In connection with cases of the withdrawal of residence permits, the immigration authorities must now take into consideration whether a withdrawal would be particularly detrimental to the foreign woman in question. Such a detrimental effect could be caused by exposure to violence, abuse or other harm causing the woman to have left the place of residence that she shared with the man permanently residing in Denmark. Thus, in such cases the amount of time spent in Denmark by a foreign woman subjected to violence is no longer the decisive factor.

In the spring of 1998, the Committee presented the second part of their report on strengthening the integration and legal position of foreign women in Denmark. The Committee has proposed a number of measures aiming at improving the integration of foreign women in Denmark. The report is currently under consideration to determine further government action in this field. By the end of 1999 no programmes or measures had been initiated.

CHAPTER 3: EDUCATION

Article 10

Access to Education

As stated in previous reports, in Denmark girls, boys, women and men have enjoyed for several generations equal rights to and equal educational opportunities at all levels from pre-school to higher education, in all sorts of training and vocational guidance and in adult and lifelong education during leisure time.

Gender Mainstreaming

Since 1994 the gender equality has been mainstreamed in the educational system. It has been included in the preamble of the Act on the Folkeskole (elementary school) and integrated in the executive orders and guidelines which make up the substance of the Act. Equality is specifically mentioned in the curriculum guidelines for the compulsory topic: Educational, vocational and labour market orientation.

Equality is also part of the objectives and curricula for higher secondary education as well as of the guidelines for study and career planning. Vocational training is continuously seen as a specific tool for gender equality, and grants are still available for projects aimed at improving the situation for girls and women in this part of the education system.

Human rights education is not an obligatory part of the national curriculum, but in the objectives of the Folkeskole the dimension ' The Equal Value of Human Beings' is included as one of the basic norms upon which the Folkeskole should build its teaching.

Level of Education

The level of education for the population as a whole has been increasing steadily. At the same time, there is an increasing proportion of the population with a higher university education.

The proportion of women in education has increased in recent years – and in some areas young women are now in the majority. The women's share of the student population is increasing. In age cohort 20-66 years the percentage of women having completed compulsory education only, has thus fallen from 55 per cent in 1985 to 44 per cent in 1994 and to 38 per cent in 1997.

Girls are now in the majority in upper secondary school (60 per cent in 1997) and in medium length university education (66 per cent in 1997). However, boys still form the majority in vocational education (55 per cent in 1996). In regard to higher education the sexes are now nearly even (in 1997: women 49.3 per cent and men 50.7 per cent) and in some subjects women outnumber men, for instance in law and medicine which used to be "men's subjects".

In spite of these tendencies there are still great differences between women and men's choices of subjects and education. For instance, in higher university education men still dominate sciences and technical subjects. Women are, however, better represented than they used to be. For instance, in technical subjects the proportion of women has increased from 16% in 1981 to 36% in 1997. At the same time in the pedagogical and health education courses, as well as in the humanities, women are now in a clear majority, and this proportion has increased in recent years.

A very high proportion of both women and men take part in adult education and training. More women than men attend general adult education courses whereas more men attend adult labour market education courses.

Much still needs to be done to change the gender-based education choices. The government has stressed that the Folkeskole has a specific responsibility to prepare both girls and boys for a broader choice of education and jobs. In this respect it is important that both girls and boys are motivated to study subjects which they do not traditionally choose.

Primary and Lower Secondary School

In an attempt to increase equal access for boys and girls to educational qualifications, primary schools are striving to increase the interest of girls in technical subjects and the natural sciences, e.g. through an earlier introduction to the subjects. For that purpose a new subject, Natural/Technical Sciences, was introduced in 1994. The subject is taught from fourth grade level. An assessment report on the

new Natural/Technical Sciences subject has shown a continuing and considerable gender difference between the choice of subjects and teaching methods of the male and female teachers. There are relatively more male than female teachers in technical subjects, mathematics, physics, and chemistry, while there are more female teachers in natural science and biology.

Higher Secondary Education and Vocational Training

The proportion of women in higher secondary education has been increasing. In 1997 there was a small majority of women, and in 1997 women made up 60 per cent of those attending higher secondary education courses.

Seen from the aggregate level, the changes in vocational training have not been outstanding. In 1998 men made up 55 per cent of the students. However, these figures disguise significant differences within and between the different courses and subjects. Women make up 75 per cent of the students in the office and clerical education courses, and women dominate subjects in service industries by 90 per cent. On the contrary, men make up 96 percent of the students in subjects such as steel and metalwork (in one third of the subjects there are no women present) and in construction and transport. However, there are now more subjects with a more balanced gender proportion than before, but there is still a long way to go before gender equality has been reached in vocational training.

An important priority for the Ministry of Education is to ensure equal opportunities for both girls and boys in information technology. For example, in 1997 a trial and development project was established in the subject IT in vocational education and training, also including aspects of girls' attitudes towards IT. At upper-secondary schools, trials have been established to include IT in all subjects for all pupils. Generally, girls and boys have a very different approach to the IT medium. Opportunities to work in groups have been exploited to advantage. In this way education can take account of specific groups of pupils in different situations.

Also, experience shows, that more women/girls will apply for training in the IT branch if the image of the trade is changed, for instance by replacing traditional vocabulary connected with IT with words like: design, communication and so forth.

Further and Higher Education

Proportion of Women and Men

In 1997, there was a 52 per cent majority of men in short term higher education courses, whereas women made up 66 per cent of the students in the medium length higher education courses. Women and men were almost equal in long term higher education courses (women 49.3 and men 50.7 per cent – in 1998 equalised to 50/50 per cent). As mentioned, the courses also here reveal gender preferences.

University Teaching and Research

In 1998, provisions that IT must be included as an integrated part of all subjects in education were laid down in the Statutory Order on New Teacher Training for primary and lower-secondary schools.

In 1985, women made up only 17 per cent of PhD students. In 1999 the proportion has increased to almost 40 per cent, but also here the research areas chosen are gender divided. One of the explanations to the increase is that the number of PhD positions has been increased within health education, which traditionally attracts many women. It is still very difficult to attract women to technical and natural science subjects.

The agreement between the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations and the Ministry of Finance on salaried PhD scholarships, which entered into force 1 January 1998, stipulates that PhD students on scholarships receive the same status as employees so that students are included in the government agreement on maternity leave, adoption, and child-care days. PhD students who were granted a scholarship before the agreement entered into force could choose, if they had a child, to remain on a normal student grant for up to 12 months.

The increase in the number of women in university teaching and research, illustrated by female PhD students is not reflected in the recruiting or number of employed university teaching and research staff. In 1982 women made up 3 per cent of the professors at universities. In 1991 the percentage had increased a little to 4 and in 1995 it had increased to 6 per cent. In 1997, the Ministry of Education analysed the figurers from the years 1994-1996. There had been an increase of around 9 per cent in the category of lecturers and 2 per cent in the categories of assistant professors and professors.

An investigation showed that from 1995 to 1996 around 50 percent of the applicants to professor positions were women. Among the applicants who were evaluated as qualified, women made up 39 per cent. However, as indicated, only 6 per cent of the professors are women.

Consequently, the gender balance among university teaching and research staff still leaves much to be desired. In recent years several steps have been taken to change the situation, but so far without any significant results:

- The research programme on Gender Barriers in Higher Education and Research, which was launched in 1996, is still running. It will be concluded in 2001, and the results will then be transformed into political action.
- In 1997, a special programme was launched for women researchers. The FREJA Programme, Female Researchers in Joint Action, was allocated DKK 78 million for research projects led by outstanding female researchers. In December 1998, 16 researchers received a research grant from the FREJA programme, all of which were women. The research projects cover a variety of subject areas within the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. The programme runs for a period of 4 years.
- In 1997, the Ministry of Research and Information Technology published an 11-point action plan aimed at increasing the number of women in research positions. This plan for more women in research contains the following main points: 1) Equal Opportunities: a Management Responsibility, 2) More Female Professors, 3) Awareness in Job Advertising, 4) Gender Neutral Selection Committees, 5) Tutoring and Mentoring, 6) Yearly Progress Report on Equal Opportunities in Research, 7) Higher priority in Gender Research, 8) Government Research Institute on Equal Opportunities, 9) Child Rearing Allowance for Young Women and Men, 10) Family and Career Balance, 11) Equal Opportunities in all Walks of Life.
- As a result of the 11 point action plan, a committee under the Ministry of Research and Information Technology (the Research Equality Committee) published a report at the end of October 1998 containing a series of recommendations on how to increase the number of female researchers in Denmark. These recommendations were debated by the Danish Parliament in February 1999. On the basis of this debate and the recommendations of the committee, the Minister of Research and Information Technology will consider appropriate measures to further promote equal opportunities in research.
- In 1999, the Equal Status Council published a report on the status of gender equality in the universities as well as a comprehensive set of recommendations. These recommendations dealt with

how to improve the gender balance among the personnel; e.g. that the universities could hire consultants to focus on the structural obstacles faced by women. Moreover, the personnel should report directly to the management. Finally, it was recommended that Equality Commissions/Committees should be established at the different institutions and faculties.

In most Danish universities BA programmes and open university programmes are now offered by the existing centres for women's studies or/and gender studies. Also, a nation-wide PhD programme is now running, "The Understanding of Gender in an interdisciplinary Perspective". Gender studies are able to meet the demands of an interdisciplinary approach, which is now highly ranked in national and international research programmes.

In recognition that documentation is very important to pinpoint why there is a lack in numbers of women within the world of research, the Ministry of Research has initiated an analysis of three years recruitment to the Danish universities in a gender perspective. The report was published in late 1999. One conclusion is that women do *apply* for university positions to the same extent as their male colleagues. A follow up report is planned for the year 2000.

In the beginning of 2000 the Ministry of Research and the Danish Universities have signed a number of university performance contracts, which provide a working frame for each university in the coming years. All universities have committed themselves in their contracts to working for better gender equality.

Adult and Lifelong Learning

'Lifelong' education for both women and men is an area of high priority in the Ministry of Education, and the main objective is to improve qualifications for those who left school without any supplementary education. A number of schooling types are relevant for students who leave school after a short education, for example "non-residential folk high schools", "production schools", and adult education centres.

Folk High Schools and Adult Education Centres

Open education and many types of adult education seem to attract relatively more women than men, except for more specialist vocational courses, which are popular among a relatively high number of

men, often young men. In particular, non-residential folk high schools and adult education centres are popular among relatively many women of whom especially the women of the older generations have a poorer educational background than men.

Training and Introduction Courses

As an aspect of the government's attempt to reduce the level of gender division on the labour market, various training and introduction courses are carried out for both women and men in professions that are traditionally occupied by the other gender. Special training is offered to unskilled unemployed women. Such initiatives are subject to exemption from the Equal Treatment Act granted by the Equal Status Council. The training and introduction courses have proved to be an important method to make the horizontal gender division on the labour market disappear.

In 1998, The Equal Status Council granted exemptions from the Equal Treatment Act to help to increase the number of women in the field of IT. Courses for women only, as well as conferences and media debate, have been some of the tools employed in order to reach the goal of having more women choose jobs where knowledge of IT is a precondition.

CHAPTER 4: LABOUR MARKET

Article 11

The Situation in the Labour Market

As reported earlier, women and men have free and equal access to any occupation and type of employment. Furthermore, a gender-balanced labour market is seen as one of the most important goals in Denmark in relation to gender equality.

Employment Rate

Women in Denmark have a high employment rate. In 1998, women's employment rate had increased to 73.3 per cent, whereas men's had decreased to 81.6 per cent. The increase in women's employment rate took place from 1981 to 1989. After 1989 women's employment rate has been nearly constant. For men, the employment rate was nearly constant during the period 1981-1989, after which it decreased to the present level.

The high employment rate for women means that women have achieved a high degree of economic independence. The rise in economic activity among women has taken place in periods of structural change and increased unemployment. Women are still not at the same level as men, but as men's employment rate has decreased, women and men's employment rates are now closer to each other than ever before.

Unemployment Rate

In 1998, the unemployment rate was 7.9 per cent for women and 5.5 per cent for men. The unemployment rate for women (and men) has been decreasing since 1996. In 1996, the unemployment rate for women was 9.9 per cent and in 1997 8.3 per cent. However, women's unemployment rate is still generally higher than that of men. The largest difference in 1998 is in the age groups 25-34 and 55-67 years; the smallest difference is in the age groups under 24 and 40-49 years.

Women also make up a proportionately larger share of the permanently unemployed and the low-wage earners. In a joint effort, the Ministry of Labour and the Women Workers' Union have launched a number of projects aimed at activating unskilled unemployed labour.

Occupational and Employment Barriers for Women

However, women still face significant occupational and employment barriers. Women are still more seriously affected by unemployment than men in nearly all professions and age groups. The labour market is still divided according to gender as most men are employed in occupations in which they predominate and women in occupations where women are in a majority. The salary gap between women and men is still about 20 per cent, and has not diminished recently. Women have still greater difficulties in reaching management level. In addition women still have the main responsibility for children and family in spite of their high occupation level. The low percentage of men who make use of their right to paid parental leave and paternity leave confirms this tendency.

Part-time Employment

Over the years, there has been a general decrease in the number of employees in part-time employment. In 1999, women in part-time employment made up 17.9 per cent of people in employment compared to 10.8 per cent for men. The proportion of women working part-time has decreased during the last 20 years from around 46 to 18 per cent. At the same, time the proportion of men working part-time has increased from around 5 to 10 per cent.

Part-time employment has usually been associated with women. However, during recent years the attitude to part-time employment has changed. Today, part-time employment is seen as a possibility for both women and men who wish to have a shorter working day in specific periods of their lives.

Women and men in Part-time employment	1977	1983	1987	1993	1997	1998
Women	46.1	35.2	30.2	24.2	18.5	17.9
Men	5.4	8.2	8.8	11.0	10.7	10.8

Source: Statistical ten-year-reviews, 1993 and 1998, Statistics Denmark

Gender Division of the Labour Market

Gender division of the labour market is still dominant in the labour market and illustrates that basic differences in the behaviour of men and women still exist. Women and men are to a large extent employed in different sectors. In 1997, half of the employed women were employed in public and

personal services. In trade and skilled crafts, transport, fishing, energy, water and industry men made up 68-90 per cent of the employed.

There are several reasons why the labour market is gender segregated, for instance that women and men choose to study different subjects. Women dominate the humanities, health and social studies, where the probability for employment in the public sector is great. Men, however, dominate the technically oriented studies. Another explanation is that women and men are attracted to specific types of jobs.

In 1998, women made up 75 per cent of the employed in counties and municipalities. In contrast, men made up around 66 per cent of the employed in the private sector. Within the state sector men made up 58 percent of the employed.

The position of women on the labour market reflects the vertically gender divided labour market. Co-entrepreneurs are often women, whereas men are the majority among self-employed and entrepreneurs. Men are also dominant as employees at highest levels and as top managers in the private and public sector (see chapter 2).

Attempts are made to make the gender divided labour market disappear, both horizontally and vertically, for instance through gender mainstreaming in recruitment and promotion, harmonisation of work and family responsibilities for women and men and initiatives to obtain equal remuneration.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and the later Ministerial Commission on Children, have focused on how more men can be represented as educationists and teachers in nurseries and kindergartens, as many such institutions are traditionally dominated by women. Both girls and boys need to be together with women as well as with men, thus this initiative should be seen as a means to break down gender divisions in the labour market. In 1997, the publication, 'Boys in female dominated surroundings', was published and also in 1997 a working group was set up, in which the Equal Status Council was represented. In October 1998, the Ministry of Social Affairs published the report 'More men employed in kindergartens".

Employment Opportunity Measures

Gender Mainstreaming

As stated in chapter 1, the government's gender equality policy is based on gender mainstreaming. The Minister for Gender Equality has the immediate responsibility for promoting gender equality, while the respective ministers are responsible for ensuring gender equality within their portfolio. Within the portfolio of the Minister for Labour all political initiatives are being assessed to secure gender equality.

Since 1997, Denmark has taken part in a Nordic Gender Mainstreaming project, initiated by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The purpose is to develop a Nordic model for gender mainstreaming on the basis of 12 sub-projects in the Nordic countries. Denmark has chosen a municipality, Ringsted, as a case study: 'Equal Treatment in Recruiting'. The project takes place in an organisation with 3,600 employees who deal with the 30,000 citizens living in the municipality. Today the work force consists of 77 per cent women and 23 per cent men. The target group therefore comprises both women and men. The aim is to test and develop methods to mainstream gender equality in the recruitment of personnel procedures and encourage a debate on gender equality in public institutions and companies. In 1998, the municipality in co-operation with the Equal Status Council issued a brochure intended to create discussion among the employees and also act as a guide to all appointment committees. The project will be completed in 2000.

Focus on Men

As a consequence of the change in the gender mainstreaming concept the focus has shifted from women as a group with "additional needs", to the more complex patterns of relations between and within the genders. Both nationally and internationally there is an increasing interest in identifying the special problems faced by men and in involving men in work relating to equal opportunities. Men are now seen as a crucial part of the solution to the problem of gender inequality. That is also why the Equal Status Council has chosen to focus on men and involve them in the gender equality debate. It is against this background that Denmark has participated in the adoption of a plan of action for men and gender equality under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers, and also voted in favour of employing a person to co-ordinate studies and research into male issues. This post is the first of its kind in the world and is based at the Nordic Institute of Women's Studies and Gender Research in Oslo, Norway.

In May 1997, the Council arranged the conference 'Men's Workplace Cultures' to contribute to the debate about new gender roles. In November 1999, the Council published the book 'Men on their Way' to initiate a debate on men's roles as fathers, spouses, divorced fathers, and employees with family responsibilities, but also to discuss whether if the dominance of female values makes it difficult to be a man at 'the bottom of society'.

Affirmative Action

Affirmative action in favour of the under-represented gender is one of the most controversial subjects in the debate on gender equality in Denmark. It is applied in relation to the employment of women in traditionally male dominated areas, as well as to men in social support sectors. While affirmative action is permitted as a means to promote gender equality, many women and men do not immediately accept it as a means to promote a better gender balance. Some women argue that they do not want to get preferential treatment because of their sex. Consequently, affirmative action has only been applied in a limited number of instances.

Affirmative action is continuously discussed in the media. In order to make this debate more sophisticated, the Equal Status Council arranged a hearing in November 1998. The main subject under debate was whether affirmative action is discriminatory and whether it can actually contribute to ensuring progress in the field of gender equality. The debate continues.

Employment Opportunities

National Labour Market Authority and Public Employment Services

As stated in previous reports, the 29 equality advisors of the 14 regional Public Employment Services are important actors in relation to achieving gender equality. The advisors are involved in the development and planning of educational programmes and guidance, motivating both women and men to acquire up-to-date qualifications which correspond better to the demand of the labour market. The theoretical instruction is combined with apprenticeship in relevant enterprises. The work of the consultants is co-ordinated by the National Labour Market Authority, which also gathers results and experience and communicates this knowledge to the local level.

In recent years, the National Labour Market Authority and the Public Employment Service have applied a mainstreaming approach in working towards gender equality. At the same time, various projects provide opportunities to find new ways and methods to promote gender equality. As a strategy to promote gender equality, mainstreaming is becoming more and more prevalent in the Public Employment Service. Consequently, the tendency is that gender equality activities are increasingly identified and executed in connection with other work at the regional level of the Public Employment Service.

As gender equality in the labour market is part of the general labour market policy efforts, it is natural that the priority placed on it varies from region to region and over time. As for the current general areas, gender equality is included in work directed towards enterprises and in various ways in the prevention of so-called bottleneck problems. One of the instruments used in this connection is job rotation.

In order to make the equality work more effective and at the same time strengthen the work of gender mainstreaming of the Public Employment Service, 3 regions have started a project which intends to qualify the work of the Public Employment Service by including gender equality aspects. The overall aim of the project is to make the work of the Public Employment Service more professional by influencing attitudes of the staff and developing measures which can create more gender awareness in the Public Employment Service. If the project succeeds in doing this, the staff will be more gender neutral when they are giving information and advice. By focusing on the gender aspect in the daily routines, it is intended to give women as well as men more advice in areas of employment in specific areas where they hitherto have been underrepresented proportionally to their sex.

Moreover, the Public Employment Service is engaged in promoting gender equality in a broad scope of activities directed at enterprises and at work concerning qualifying the unemployed and promoting their possibilities on the labour market.

As gender equality in the labour market is included as part of general employment political activities, it is natural that priority given to these activities varies from one region to the other and over time. It should be mentioned that women are increasingly introduced to employment areas which are traditionally male areas.

Labour Market Council

In a project, initiated by a local Labour Market Council during the period 1995-1998, 100 unemployed men have completed a 20 months' training course to be qualified as social and health helpers. 70 of the 100 men were subsequently employed in this field. An evaluation shows that the unemployed and people without any previous education are willing to start in a new branch, if they can be educated both professionally and personally – and that men are willing to start in jobs traditionally considered as typical women's jobs.

Counties and Municipalities

In November 1997 and December 1999, The Equal Status Council published an assessment of the biannual gender equality reports, prepared by local authorities in accordance with the Local Authority Councils Act. The two reports have been disseminated widely, and have also been submitted to Parliament's Local Authority Committee.

From 1997 to 1999 the numbers of municipalities which have made a special effort to inform citizens and employees of the local gender equality policy and the status of gender equality have doubled. The assessments show that many different initiatives have been taken by a number of local authorities. Particular priority is placed on recruitment of the under-represented gender; women managers; as well as on better cohesion between family life and work. The most active local authorities point out that they face a constraint in existing gender roles and family patterns, inducing them to concentrate on younger generations.

However, after evaluating the results it must be stated there has been no progress in breaking down the gender divided labour market in the municipalities. Women still make up around 75 per cent of the employees, whereas men hold more than 85 percent of the top management positions. In Denmark's largest work place for women, gender equality is at a standstill, and in practice only few results have been achieved. A lot remains to be done by local authorities in relation to gender equality.

In October 1999, the Equal Status Council together with the National Association of Local Authorities in Denmark, and the Association of County Councils in Denmark arranged a course on gender equality. The target group was politicians, managers and employees working with personnel administration in counties and municipalities.

Women Entrepreneurs

In September 1997, the Danish Federation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises arranged an EU Conference in co-operation with the Equal Status Council and other organisations on "Women co-entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurs and Business Owners in Europe". Introductions and studies indicated that women entrepreneurs experience more barriers than men, and it concluded with a number of recommendations to the EU and EU Member States to promote initiatives to create more women entrepreneurs. The Federation published a study on women co-entrepreneurs in 1998.

In December 1997, the Ministry of Business and Industry took steps to focus on women entrepreneurs by initiating a two-year project to produce statistics and information, to analyse the barriers faced by the women entrepreneurs, and to put forward proposals for new initiatives. To place this topic on the political agenda, the Ministry included a separate chapter in its yearly Business Report in September 1998 entitled "More women needed among the entrepreneurs of the future". Afterwards, a special publication in Danish and English was issued to disseminate information and encourage a public discussion about the subject. In 1999, supplementary analyses have been carried out, and in November 1999 a conference was arranged to debate future policies. The analyses will be published in 2000. It will be the basis on which the Danish government will consider initiatives to ensure that in the future more women are encouraged to start up their own businesses.

In 1998 a special unit was set up at the Danish Agency for Trade and Industry. This unit has established collaborations with the involved parties working to promote women's entrepreneurship, and EU and OECD experience has been taken into consideration. Regular statistical reports on entrepreneurs published for the first time in 2000 will be gender divided, in the future. In the years ahead, the unit will gather more information on employment of women entrepreneurs and thus implement the governmental goal of increasing the number of women entrepreneurs.

Management

The effort to get more women managers into the public and private sectors has only been partly accomplished, as women are still under-represented – especially in the private sector.

Men still make up 90-95 per cent of top management in Denmark. Even if the public sector has a slightly higher proportion of women top managers than the private labour market, the difference is not significant.

There are, however, hardly any available statistics concerning neither heads of companies – nor of managers in the private sector. The Danish Institute of Statistics has cautiously compared different categories of positions in the state, the municipalities and the private sector – and drawn up some statistics concerning managers in the private sector.

The figures show that Danish women do not participate in economic decision-making in the private sector to the same degree as men. Women only constitute five per cent of top-managers , and there has only been a slight increase from 1983-1992 from three to five per cent. There has been a much higher increase in the number of women in middle management, from six to fourteen per cent in positions.

Concerning the public sector, the percentage of women in middle management in the state has increased from nine to twenty per cent from 1983 to 1996, with approximately the same figures in the municipalities (see chapter 2). In the public sector, the number of senior positions held by women increased in the period 1983-1996 to approximately 10 per cent.

Having compared figures from the state administration, the municipalities and the private sector, it can be concluded that the state has the highest percentage of female managers – both at middle and top level – whereas the private sector has the lowest.

A survey, 'Women in leading positions', published in 1996 by the Nordic Council of Ministers gives the figures of the distribution of gender among members on the administrative boards of the 100 largest companies in Denmark. The figures show that only one (!) per cent of members of boards of directors are women, only ten per cent of members of executive committees are women, and around half of the companies had no women in top management.

Moreover, in the powerful networks between companies made up of employed managers from both the private and public sectors, the women's share is only 5.5 per cent. However, in recent years more

female networks have been established, for both female managers as well as pre-management networks.

The low number of women managers and economic decision-makers[3] is continuously being addressed through surveys, public debate, conferences etc., in order to promote attitude changes in companies and institutions. In the public sector, plans of action for equality have been used (to recruit more women managers and to qualify women who want to become managers), while these plans of action have only been used to a slight degree in the private sector.

In April 1998 the Ministry of Labour held, in collaboration with the Danish Association of Managers and Executives, a conference on the quality of management in 2002 based on the different management values of women and men.

Equal Remuneration

The pay gap is one of the most serious problems in the gender equality field. Many initiatives have been taken at both governmental and NGO level to promote progress.

Under Article **141** of the EC Treaty, employees in all Member States have the right to equal pay without any discrimination due to gender. In Denmark the EC Directive on equal pay has been implemented by the Act on Equal Pay to Men and Women (see annex).

In 1996, women's pay was around 10-24 per cent lower than that of men.

Women's income in per cent of men's	Municipality Women	State Women	Private Women
1996	86.3	88.7	76.4

Sources: Annual Report 1998, The Danish Equal Status Council

[3] Reference is made to the written answers given in connection with the examination of the Third Periodic CEDAW Report in January 1997.

Notwithstanding the Act on Equal Pay (which has been effective for 23 years), 29 equal pay cases taken to Danish courts, years of expressed commitment to equal pay policies, and numerous equal pay projects, major differences still exist in the wages and salaries of women and men.

In autumn 1999, the Ministry of Labour arranged three conferences on equal pay in order to focus on the causes of wage differentials and to institute a dialogue with the social partners on what is needed to remove the wage differentials. The themes of the three conferences were "The gender divided labour market causes wage gaps", "Pay and professional prestige" and, "Gender neutral pay systems". The conferences have deepened the knowledge of the mechanisms involved in setting the wages, and they form a good basis for the further work of the Ministry of Labour to close the wage gap. In addition, the Ministry of Labour has initiated two projects on equal pay.

The Institute of Social Research is about to finalise a project on equal pay statistics. The results of this project will in the long term make up the statistical basis which will make it possible to compare the actual wages. This has not been possible before statistics on salaries and wages have been changed. In the future, reliable figures will be included in statistics, and comparisons will be made at intervals.

The new pay systems make it important to watch their impact on the pay gap. That is why it is necessary to control the systems, the level of wages, and the wage range in order to see how the pay gap might be influenced.

Pensions

Since the previous report there have been quite a few initiatives and debates on gender discrimination regarding pensions. It is generally difficult to change the actual basis on which pensions are calculated. One main problem is certain general gender-based differences between the genders in relation to life expectancy and invalidity which make it difficult to argue for a common pension scheme for women and men. Furthermore, women are often unaware of their rights and not always sufficiently informed of their position.

In spring 1998, the Ministry of Labour published a report on pensions, which examined gender determined problems concerning pension coverage. One of the conclusions of the report is that

women make up half of the members of the cross collective pension arrangements, which make up the main part of the pension coverage today. Before, men had both the highest and the lowest coverage through their pensions, whereas women generally have had a greater tradition to save in collective pension arrangements. However, in the report it is also concluded that at the same time as men's general pension coverage is improved, the present inequalities between the amount of deposit in men's and women's pensions will enlarge in the future.

In spring 1998, the Equal Status Council published a white paper on occupational pension conditions for women and men. This report was followed by a considerable debate in the media and amongst the different insurance companies, and the subject is continuously being reviewed.

In 1998, the Minister for Economic Affairs obtained the agreement of parliament on legislation regarding the equal treatment of women and men in occupational pension schemes. The proposal introduces a 'common gender' as an actuarial basis for calculating benefits for new members after 1 July 1999. Previously, women have been paid a lower pension, because they have a longer life expectancy. The new legislation corrects this inequality for people, who are admitted to a pension fund after it enters into force. Since the Act concerns only new members of a pension scheme, it will not be fully operational until 2040.

Equal Treatment

Amended Act on Equal Treatment

The Act on Equal Treatment of Men and Women states that women and men shall be treated equally
with regard to recruitment, transfer and promotion. Women and men have the right to equal working conditions and to equal access to vocational and continued training. If the employer fails to observe the obligation to offer equal treatment, the employee may be awarded compensation.

In 1989 the Act on Maternity Leave etc. was included in the Equal Treatment Act concerning Employment and Maternity Leave etc. In 1997 the Act was amended when the parliament adopted an Act on Daily Cash Allowance During Illness or Pregnancy and the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and on Maternity Leave etc. The new Act has been effective from 1 April 1998. The amendment extends maternity leave from 24 weeks to 26 weeks.

At the same time fathers have acquired the right to two weeks' paternity leave in the 25th week and 26th week after the child's birth or adoption. Only fathers who can use this right.

The new paternity leave should be viewed as a step towards promoting men's opportunities to take part in childcare and in leave of absence schemes – and also to provide better conditions for families with children. In the third quarter of 1999 around 19 per cent of men used their new right to be on **paternity** leave in weeks 25 and 26 after the child's birth or adoption – an increase in numbers since the Act entered into force.

Different Forms of Leave

In the period 1976-1997 legislation has been developed which makes it possible for the employee to take different forms of leave with a full or reduced right to receive a daily cash allowance. This act now includes articles on:

Pregnancy and maternity leave: A female employee shall be entitled to absence from work due to pregnancy and maternity from the date estimated to be 4 weeks before the birth. After the birth the parents are entitled to absence from work for a total period of 24 weeks of which up to 10 weeks can be taken by the father after the 14th week after the birth. Only one parent may use the right to absence at a time.

Paternity leave: The father of a child shall be entitled to absence for up to 2 weeks after the birth or reception of the child in the home or – according to an agreement with the employer – within the first 14 weeks after the birth. Moreover, the father has a right to 2 weeks' leave in the 25th and 26th week after the child's birth or adoption.

Extended parental leave: Employees at work have the right to leave from work to look after their children in an unbroken period of at least 8 and maximum 13 weeks. However, there is a right to leave in at least 8 and maximum 26 weeks, if the child has not reached one year of age at the time when the leave starts.

The use of leave schemes has varied much over time, mostly depending on the amount of the economic compensation. Originally, the leave compensation was 80 per cent of the maximum of the rate of the unemployment benefits. This rate was later changed to 70 per cent. Today the rate is 60 per

cent of the unemployment benefits. The use of all forms of leave schemes was at it highest in 1995 and has since decreased. In 1998, women used extended parental leave half as much as they did in 1995. Very few men take extended parental leave, and in 1998 the number of men using extended parental leave had decreased to less than half of the number who used it in 1995.

Pregnancy and maternity do not constitute lawful grounds for dismissal or discriminatory treatment of women. The same applies to men, who are on paternity Leave. If an employee is dismissed due to pregnancy or maternity the employer may be ordered to restore the employment relationship. However, the employee may, as an alternative, be awarded compensation from the employer of up to 78 weeks' pay. The burden of proof has been reversed in cases concerning dismissal due to pregnancy and maternity. Thus it is the employer who must prove that the dismissal of the employee has taken place due to grounds other than pregnancy and maternity.

Exemptions from the Act on Equal Treatment

According to the Equal Treatment Act, the Equal Status Council can grant exemptions allowing for the establishment of special measures, which deviate from the rule on equal treatment. This is possible if the objective of such measures is to promote equal opportunities between women and men (affirmative action).

In the period 1990-1999, the Equal Status Council has granted a total of 61 exemptions. Of these, 26 were exemptions directed towards men, for example permission to advertise for men for child-care institutions and in the social and health sectors, and permissions to establish special training measures for men. Six exemptions were not explicitly directed towards either males or females, but referred to measures for 'the under-represented gender'. 29 exemptions were regarding preferential treatment of women, for example advertising special PhD positions for women and courses and research positions for women.

Regarding sexual harassment, promotion of women, elderly women and the working environment see the previous report.

Harmonisation of Family Life and Working life

The relationship between working life and family life is a constant focal area: in 1998 women's employment rate was between 80 and 88 per cent for the age group in which women usually have children (20 to 45 years).

Public day-care facilities are required by law. They are run by local authorities. Child-care leave provisions are in force, and in recent years the number of children and the number of places have increased in both day nurseries, play groups and school-care schemes.

In recent years the Ministry of Finance has worked on identifying tools to improve the relationship between working life and family life. Within the civil service, several arrangements exist which make it easier to combine working life and family life, such as full salary during maternity leave, "care days", allowance to stay at home on the first day of a child's illness period, possibility to work at home, etc. Although the mentioned arrangements are valid for both women and men, primarily women make use of them. In the private sector, these rights may be obtained through collective bargaining or individual contracts with the employer.

In recent years several projects have been initiated on the issue of how to reconcile working and family life. The project 'Time for a Better Life' from 1997 was carried out by the Women Workers Union in Denmark with financial support from the Ministry of Social Affairs at the company Union-Pak. The four-month project allowed 10 female employees with small children a 30 hour working week with full wages, flexitime and the possibility of an extra 10 days off with 80 per cent wage compensation. In the 'Time for a Better Life' project, the employer estimates that there was a slight increase in productivity during the period. The employer is positive towards offering the staff a 30-hour week, however, without the full wage compensation. The employees found that the shorter working week improved their lives considerably.

The Equal Status Council has focused on men's roles and the reconciliation of working life and the family life, for instance in campaigning and promoting communication on men's use of leave schemes, time used in sharing of household work and men's rights in relation to divorce and custody.

As mentioned in the previous report, employees who wish to have a break in their working life, in order to take care of the family, have the possibility of extended parental leave. In 1995, only 10 per cent of those who were granted extended parental leave were men. For that reason the Equal Status Council initiated a campaign in 1995. In 1997, the Equal Status Council published the brochure 'Father on Leave' which evaluates the campaign and describes leave schemes in all Nordic countries. Unfortunately, very little has happened. Three main barriers are mentioned to explain why only a few men choose to go on extended parental leave: 1) the economic compensation is not sufficient, 2) the leave period is not flexible enough, 3) attitudes and traditions. The Council continues to stress the importance of having more flexible leave schemes, changing attitudes and making it easier in the work place to combine work with family life. In November 1999, the Council published the book 'Men on their Way' to be used in the debate.

In January 2000, a new law on extended parental leave was adopted. The aim is more flexibility. It is proposed that parents can take leave for a period of eight weeks (instead of thirteen weeks). The two last weeks should be used to familiarising the child with the child care institution. Parents with disabled children shall have special conditions.

Social Support Services

Day-care facilities and children's sickness were described in the previous report.

In January 1997, the municipality of Copenhagen established a 'Pregnancy Fund' to which the municipality's institutions pay a yearly amount of 0.7 per cent of their wage budget. For smaller institutions it has been a rather heavy economic burden to cover women's absence during maternal leave. The intention with this new pregnancy fund is to make it more attractive to employ and promote women employees.

The Finance Act in 1998 made it possible for state-run institutions to be compensated for their extra costs in connection with substitutes during leave periods, child births and adoption.

Based on an EU decision and by request of the Equal Status Council the legislation on employees has been amended, effective from 1 April 1999. Consequently women absent from work due to pregnancy related sickness will no longer receive only half of their salary, but the full amount. Absence

from work caused by pregnancy related sickness is now treated like absence due to any other type of illness.

As mentioned in the previous report, flexible working hours agreed on individually between employers and employees are increasingly utilised in order to find the best way to harmonise working life and family life. In 1999, the Ministry of Finance and the employers' organisations agreed through the collective bargaining process to have a special provision in the new agreement, stating that flexible working hours can be arranged if the employers and the representatives of employee organisations agree. This means that most ministries today have introduced flexitime, allowing the employees to start and end their work in a certain period of time of their own choosing.

The rapid growth of communication technology has given rise to new ways of organising work. It is now possible that IT based work is performed at other places than the traditional workplace, usually at the home of the employee. In recent years trials and experiments on teleworking have been initiated in public institutions and private enterprises (distance work) with the aim of promoting flexible working hours

The Ministry of Finance has in co-operation with central organisations entered into a framework agreement for teleworking in the Danish State. An experimental scheme came into effect 1st January 1998. The objective is to facilitate the use of teleworking as an instrument towards increased flexibility in the organisation of work and improved reconciliation of working and family life. It is too early to evaluate the experiment as it will not be concluded before March 2001.

There are for the time being no statistics available on how many women and men using new technologies, are working outside the place of work.

CHAPTER 5: OTHER LEGAL AND SOCIAL EFFORTS

Article 12

Health Problems

As stated in previous reports, women and men have equal access to health care services, including those related to family planning. The government continuously evaluates the prioritisation of gender-related health issues and preventive programmes addressing health issues specific to women, such as breast cancer. Research related to women's health is considered essential in Denmark, and women are included as subjects of research on the same basis as men.

Fertility and Adoptions

Women's fertility was at it lowest level in the middle of the 1980s (1.4). Since then it has been increasing. In 1997 it was 1.8. At the same time as the number of births per woman decreased, the average age for women giving birth increased from 27 years of age in 1960 to 29.4 years in 1997. In the same period, the average age for women giving birth increased from 22.5 years of age to 27 years. The increase is a consequence of more women today deliberately postponing child.

There are no overall statistics available concerning fertility treatment and the use of medically assisted reproduction techniques, but it is being considered at present to register all treatment of childlessness. What is registered is only "IVF" treatment (in vitro fertilisation). In 1994/95 (more recent figures are not available), 9,400 treatments were started. From these 2,200 children were born.

In 1997, 579 adoptions were accepted compared with 495 in 1994.

Abortion

Since 1988 there has been a relative decrease in the share of induced abortions. In 1996 the share of induced abortions constituted 26.8% of the number of births of live born children.

In the beginning of 1998, the RU-486 pill was introduced in Denmark to be used in case of abortion between the 8th and 9th week of pregnancy. The RU-486 pill is not accessible in all hospitals, but it is expected to be so during 2000. Statistics and experiences are not yet available.

In October 1999, a new action plan on abortion was adopted in order to minimise the number of induced abortions. DKK 20 million has been granted, and the Minister of Health has set up an expert group to follow the implementation of the action plan. The action plan is based on the existing access to free abortion before the end of the 12th week of pregnancy. The aim is to increase the amount of information, counselling, the exchange of experiences, training of counselling personnel and research. Initiatives to be taken include model projects, nation-wide telephone counselling and a handbook for the counselling personnel. An evaluation will take place in January 2005.

Lifespan

In 1997-98, women on average lived 5 years longer than men. In the 1980s the difference between women and men's life span was 6 years. The reason for men's shorter life span is that they have a death rate above average level in all age groups. Developments in later years have narrowed the gender difference, due to the fact that there has been a greater increase in men's life span than in women's. In 1997-98, the average life span rose to 78.6 years for women and 73.7 for men.

In the 1970's and 1980's the most frequent cause of death amongst both women and men was coronary diseases. This has changed. The number of deaths resulting from coronary diseases is decreasing, while deaths from cancer continue to rise. In 1997, cancer had become the most common cause of death for both sexes, as 25,6 per cent of all deaths were caused by cancer.

Danish women smoke on a very large scale. Since the early nineties the proportion of female and male smokers has been almost identical. In 1994, 35 per cent among women and 39 per cent among men smoked everyday. The number has been on a steady but slow decrease during the nineties. In 1999, 27 per cent of women and 35 per cent of men indicated that they smoked everyday. There appears to be a decline in the number of female heavy smokers. All through the nineties approximately 14 per cent of women smoked more than 15 cigarettes a day. The figure dropped to 12 per cent in 1999. Among men, however, the number remains at approximately 19 per cent.
Due to the large proportion of smokers among women, death caused by lung cancer has increased in the female population, as well as death caused by obstructive pulmonary disease.

To reduce the expected increase in deaths from lung cancer, the government introduced an anti-smoking campaign in 1995, conducted by the Danish Council for Smoking and Health (the STOP

Programme). The outcome of anti-smoking campaigns to date suggests that it is necessary to apply three different methods, concurrently: 1) Tightening smoking regulations, 2) Offering help and advice to those wishing to stop, and 3) Encouraging young people to refrain from taking up smoking in the first place.

HIV/AIDS

By the end of 1998 641, women were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Denmark. This is nearly 25 percent of all persons diagnosed HIV/AIDS.

Women are not a prioritised target group in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, but women are part of risk groups as intravenous-drug abusers. Moreover, priority is given to informing the public in general. In 1998, 61 women were reported as having HIV and 11 women as having AIDS. Most of HIV-positive women belong to ethnic minorities and are born abroad.

Health Promotion Programme

In May 1999, the government announced a cross-sectorial public health and health promotion programme. The following women-specific goals are included as part of the programme:

- Boosting efforts to limit smoking and alcohol consumption among pregnant women
- Protecting children and pregnant women against damaging drugs
- Boosting efforts to secure pregnant women against jobs that could harm the foetus
- Intensifying efforts with respect to pregnant drug abusers and limiting the damage caused by smoking among these women
- Developing counselling methods directed towards very young, socially disadvantaged mothers and families

Article 6

Violence and Rape

Acts of violence against women are punishable according to Sections 244-249 of the Penal code. These provisions cover acts of violence irrespective of the gender of the victim. In determining the penalty, account shall be taken i.a. of the seriousness of the offence, according to Section 80 of the

Penal Code. This assessment includes information regarding the victim, and includes that these provisions are adequate and effective as regards violence against women.

As stated in the previous report, violence against women is considered and treated as a human rights' issue in Denmark, and the attention given to the issue has increased considerably since the previous report. Both the government and NGOs have implemented activities, in order to eradicate any type of gender specific violence.

Violence against women is caused not least by the fact that women are regarded by some as objects. Violence can be seen as an intricate element of the male dominance of women. Experience indicates that a multi-sector approach is necessary to effectively combat violence against women and to support victims. Strengthened co-operation between the government and NGOs, as well as involving male perpetrators, is essential.

In 1979, NGOs established the first crisis centres for women who had either been victims of violence or threatened with violence. In 1999 approximately 36 crisis centres existed nation-wide. They are still run primarily by volunteers. Women do not have to be registered and anonymity is fully respected. Children under the age of 18 can accompany women to crisis centres. The crisis centres are partly publicly funded and partly funded by payments made by victims staying overnight (the payment ranges from DKK 0-200). The crisis centres offer comprehensive support to victims of violence, and all crisis centres now have children's counsellors. Male victims of violence in Denmark now have two shelters at their disposal.

The number of women who turn to the crisis centres is increasing. This development has been closely monitored. Networks based on self-help groups are also established for women in vulnerable situations. The Ministry of Social Affairs is for instance supporting initiatives for women prostitutes and other groups who suffer from various kinds of abuse.

December 1993, the Danish Ministry of the Interior appointed a Committee on Integration and the Legal rights of Foreign Women. The overall objective of the committee was a review of the requirements for obtaining or the revocation of a residence permit. The committee was to pay special attention to the possible necessity of changing these regulations in cases where marriage or cohabitation was dissolved due to domestic violence. Furthermore, the objective of the committee was to analyse

a number of important matters regarding the integration of foreign women in Denmark in order to examine how many foreign women used the refuges for battered women.

The first part of the report of the committee, which deals with the legal position of foreign women under the Aliens Act, was presented in September 1995. The Committee recommended among other things an amendment of the Aliens Act regarding the revocation of refusal of a residence permit if the married/cohabitation was dissolved due to domestic violence. Consequently, the Aliens Act was changed as of 1 June 1996.

Before a residence permit is revoked or refused the authorities must decide whether domestic violence has caused the situation and what consequences a revocation or denial would have for the person in question.

In July 1996, the Danish Immigration Service appointed a working group to follow up on the recommendations of the committee mentioned above.

In May 1997, this working group published its first report. The report contained a number of reflections and recommendations for administrative improvements regarding the legal position of battered foreign women. As a general follow-up on these recommendations the Danish Immigration Service is currently, in co-operation with the Danish National Commissioner of Police and the Municipality of Copenhagen, considering the procedures and rules for monitoring cohabitation and whether the police should be assisted by a social worker.

The Immigration Service has furthermore appointed a working group which is currently preparing guidelines for the handling of matters related to battered foreign women.

In September 1998, the Committee on Integration and the Legal rights of Foreign Women submitted its second report. This report mainly deals with the integration of foreign women in Denmark and the report submitted a number of proposals and recommendations for improvement of the integration prospects of ethnic minority women.

The National Commissioner of the Danish Police in co-operation with Statistics Denmark and the University of Copenhagen compiled a report based on the results of victimisation studies from 1995

and 1996. The report deals with street violence, violence in the work place and domestic violence. In 1998, the conclusions were published. The report showed a tendency in the examined material towards changes in norms and attitudes, thus contributing to a decrease in wife battering.

The private society 'National League of help to victims of violence' conducted a study of domestic violence in the period from 1995 to 1998. The study was supported financially by the Ministry of Justice. The purpose of the study was to assess the counselling given to violence-afflicted families. The parties involved have shown great interest in the project, which has generally increased women's self-esteem. In addition, women have had positive experiences from confronting the violating man/husband within the protective setting of the project. Positive results have also been achieved in regard to parents' visiting rights, division of the joint estate, custody of children and children's place of residence in cases of divorce or the breaking up of the family.

In 1997, parliament amended the law to strengthen victim support. As a result, a number of local counselling centres for victims of violence have been established. The local police authorities set up these centres, and volunteers run them. They are meant as an independent supplementary service to the services already offered by the police.

In this regard it should be noted that the Ministry of Justice has forwarded a memorandum to all police districts concerning the treatment by the police of victims for crime and accidents and their relatives. The memorandum contains guidelines for the police in the treatment of victims and their relatives as well as an outline of the relevant provisions etc. concerning victims' rights.

Denmark does not only offer support to women. As well as the two male crisis centres mentioned above, counselling services have been established for male perpetrators. A pilot project on domestic violence in one municipality concluded that 4 out of 5 male perpetrators were willing to receive treatment. Men who were doing relatively well personally, socially and professionally before the onset of violence participated longest and with greatest success in the project.

In May 1999, a group of men took the initiative to establish a 'White Ribbon' group similar to the Canadian model. The aim is to focus on the problem that in Denmark violence against women is considered to be 5-10 times as widespread as the 10,000 cases that are reported annually to the police. The group seeks to make other men aware of the problem and urges the politicians to take initiatives.

Research is needed, and an attitude change should be the result in order to minimise the problem that often is handled as a problem of private concern.

In November 1999 the Social Development Centre arranged an international conference on violence against women as part of the EU Commission's campaign on violence with the aim of strengthening consciousness and developing new strategies which also involve men.

In 1998, the Minister of Health set up a working group to develop guidelines on how to strengthen public support at local and national level for victims of sexual violence. As a result, DKK 20 million was granted over a 4 year period in October 1999 to a pilot project scheme which offers victims of sexual violence comprehensive medical and legal support as well as counselling. The scheme will also gather information and will eventually submit standards and guidelines for all parties involved in dealing with victims of sexual violence.

General criminal statistics provide little information on the extent of violence against women. However, the Ministry of Justice has, in co-operation with the police, taken an initiative to change working procedures so that in the future it will be possible to keep statistics of victims' sex and age. Furthermore, several surveys focusing i.a. on violence against women have been carried out. Among these, apart from the investigation on violence mentioned above, note should be made of the survey "The Extent and Nature of Sexual Assault in Denmark" published by the National Commissioner of Police in 1998. The purpose of the survey was to illustrate different aspects of sexual assault such as the crime itself, the victim and the perpetrator.

In November 1996, the Ministry of Social Affairs initiated a survey on 'women and children from ethnic minorities in crisis centres'. The reason for this was the steady increase in the numbers of women from ethnic minorities who made use of the centres. The report was issued in August 1999, and the results indicate that more initiatives should be taken, and that there should be a closer co-operation between the public authorities funding of the co-operation projects.

A Nordic research programme on gender and violence will be initiated in 2000. For the year 2000 DKK 3.5 million have been reserved followed by equal grants for the next four years.

'Nor Void' is also a Nordic research project established in 1998. Its aim is to map the consequences of violence against women. The programme will focus on how sexual violence affects women's health and on which measures are needed to improve victim support and thereby to avoid long term after effects (somatic illness). The programme is supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

As reported, the Danish government and NGOs have initiated a range of projects concerning violence against women. The results of the most recent of these are not yet available. However, the presence of the many refugee and crisis centres in combination with the earlier attempts from government and NGOs to combat different types of violence have had a significant impact. The amount of rapes and cases of reported domestic violence has fallen and the quality of victim support has improved with regard to all types of violence. It has been stated that there has been a change of attitude towards violence in the recent years, in the sense that violence is no longer tolerated as a domestic matter as it has been previously. More victims of violence are now able to change their situation because of their higher economic independence from the perpetrator. The women's movement has further helped many women to liberate themselves.

In addition the Minister for Gender Equality has established a working group with participation from several ministries. The aim of the working group is to strengthen efforts in the field of violence and trafficking in terms of prevention as well as protection of victims.

Incest

Sexual abuse of children is a matter of grave concern in the Danish society. Lately the government's Cross-Sectional Children Committee has set up a working group with representatives from 5 different ministries, including the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Justice, in order to work out a proposal for an action plan to strengthen actions to avoid sexual abuse of children.

Prostitution

Much more attention has been given to prostitution since the last reporting. Conferences have been arranged, and the debate has been published more widely than before.

In early 1999, parliament amended the Penal Code with respect to prostitution with a view to improving the quality of life, the health conditions and social situation for this vulnerable group of women. Although prostitution per se is not illegal in Denmark, this amendment serves to further decriminalise prostitutes. To improve the quality of life and the social status of prostitutes, the law on pimping has been changed. It is now possible for a prostitute to legally reside with a man provided he is not living off her income from prostitution to a degree that amounts to exploitation. Finally, it is now illegal for clients to buy sex from prostitutes under the age of 18.

Trafficking in Women

In early 1999 a debate on trafficking resulted in a number of initiatives, ranging from mapping the problems in seminars and conferences to enhanced police efforts in apprehending traffickers. Trafficking in women is under certain circumstances punishable under the Penal Code, which prohibits inter alia transport out of the country of persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation, as well as under the Immigration Act which prohibits the import action and smuggling of people.

In order to assure that the criminal provisions on "import" of women with a view to prostitution are in fact adequate, the Minister of Justice has asked the Director for Public Prosecutions to examine and evaluate the need for further criminal provisions in this area. The response from the Director for Public Prosecutions on the matter is still pending.

In recent years, trafficking in women has been an important part of the agenda regarding international gender equality. Media reports reveal that trafficking in women in Denmark has been going on for quite some time, and women's NGOs have highlighted the issue. The international debate and the experience of neighbouring countries have helped raise awareness of the importance of dealing with this issue. Attention to the issue has thus increased considerably in Denmark since the previous reports.

Some of the initiatives are:

- In January 1999, The Equal Status Council arranged a public and international hearing on the necessity and possibility of preventing and combating trafficking in women, focusing specifically on women from Eastern Europe and Asia. The hearing was followed by intense debate in the

media, and a further analysis was made of the problem with the purpose of identifying the need to change the legal foundation and scope to help victims of trafficking.

- In December 1999, an international conference on trafficking in women was arranged by the International Abolitionist Federation (IAF). The aim was to highlight the problems of trafficking in women with specific focus on the Baltic Countries and Eastern Europe. The aim was also to establish a close liaison between NGOs and governmental organisations in both the exporting and destination countries.
- The Minister of Justice has initiated a comprehensive inquiry with a view to uncovering the extent of the problem and the need for targeted and tailored efforts to combat trafficking in women. The Ministry of Justice has asked the Public Prosecutor to investigate to what extent further legislative initiatives are needed on prostitution in connection with trafficking in women.
- The Minister for Gender Equality has established an interdepartmental working group aiming at inter alia strengthening effort in the field of trafficking.
- Moreover, several seminars have taken place.

Denmark plays an active role internationally, including in the EU, in strengthening legislation against trafficking in women. In 1999, Denmark has been actively involved in negotiating the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime.

Circumcision of Women

Circumcision of women has been highlighted in Denmark since the previous report. It is illegal to perform female circumcision in Denmark.

In 1997 the National Board of Health launched an information campaign on female genital mutilation to take place from1997 to 1999. The aim of the campaign was to prevent female genital mutilation of girls living in Denmark.

The campaign especially targeted refugee families, primarily Somalis, living in Denmark, but also aimed at doctors, health services, teachers, interpreters, social workers and so forth. It was underlined that this practice is harmful for both young girls as well as for the adult women. The campaign consisted of three elements:

- Information material for health-care personnel, teachers, social workers, etc.
- A video in Somali for Somalis – in order to initiate a discussion. The video gives information on health risks involved in female genital mutilation and children's rights in Denmark,
- Debates for Somalis and local support groups working to prevent female genital mutilation.

An evaluation of the campaign, the video, and the handbook took place in 1999. Results will guide initiatives in this field. One of the lessons learned is how important it is to include Somalis in preventive work. This has been done by forming a joint Danish-Somali working group and by promoting joint information and health education activities. It is expected that the initiative will be renewed for another year in 2000.

Articles 13-16

Eliminating Gender Discrimination

As reported previously, all requirements of the Convention have been complied with. The same rights are given to women and men in economic and social life, as regards equality before the law and in all matters relating to marriage and family relations.

Reference is made to previous reports and answers to the questions given during the examination of the Third Periodic CEDAW Report in New York in January 1997.

TABLES

Table 1. Women's representation in elected bodies, 1970-1998

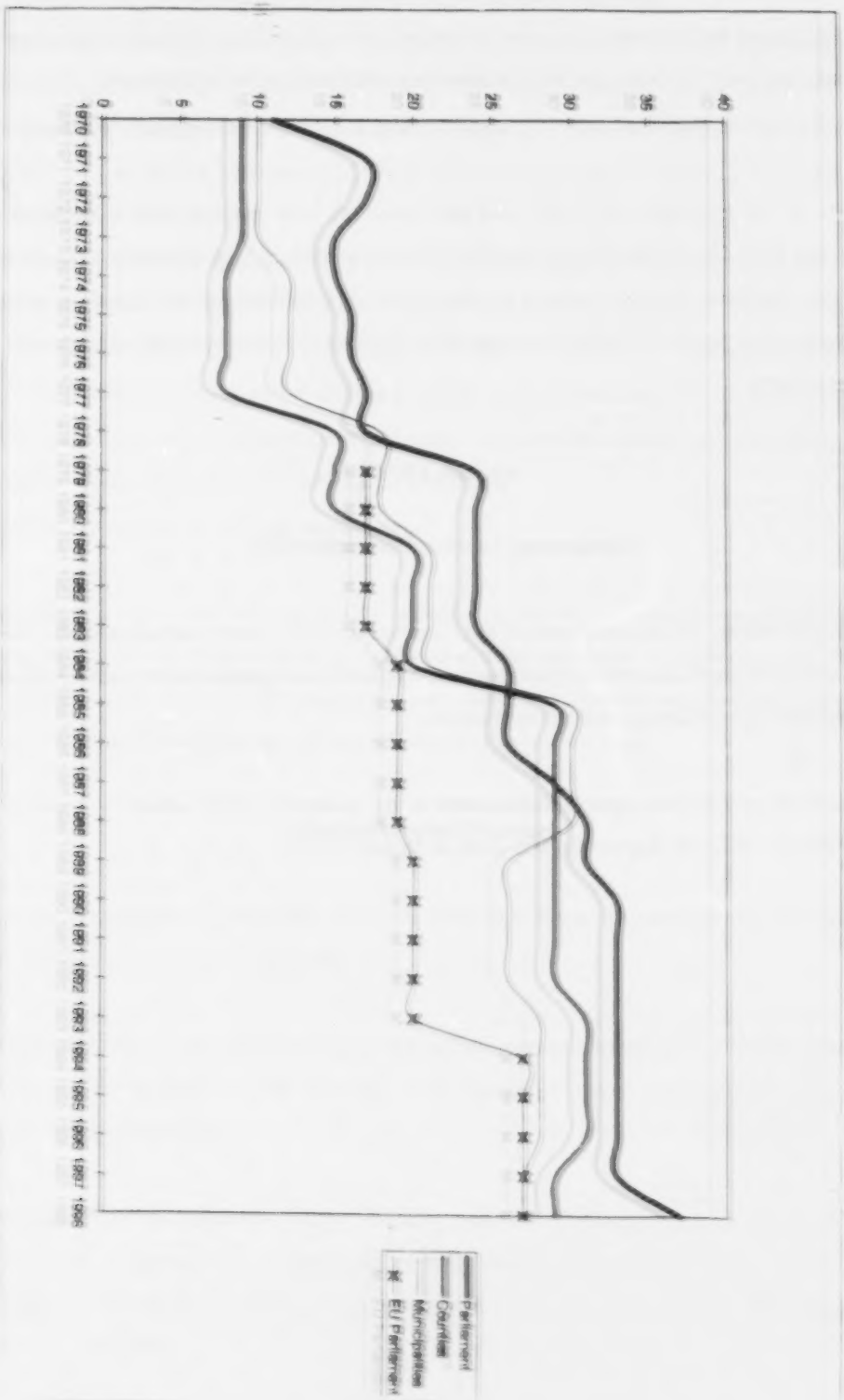

Table 2. Women's representation in public councils, boards and committees, 1985-1998

Committees set up from	Women %
5-31.12.86	30,7%
7-31.12.87	38,0%
1988	38,0%
1989	31,2%
1990	38,0%
1991	34,9%
1992	37,0%
1993	37,8%
1994	37,0%
1995	32,6%
1996	38,9%
1997	38,4%
1998	38,0%

Sources: Statsministeriet og Ligestillingsrådet 1999 (Prime Minister's Department and the Equal Status council).

Table 3. Women and men by completed highest level of education, 1997

	Women Number	Men number	Women %	Men %	All %
Basic	616.354	519.350	38,2	31,2	34,7
General secondary	65.593	51.966	4,1	3,1	3,6
Vocational secondary	29.436	27.061	1,8	1,6	1,7
Vocational	508.265	669.961	31,5	40,3	36,0
Short higher	108.219	82.426	6,7	5,0	5,8
Medium higher	151.794	123.052	9,4	7,4	8,4
Long higher	49.413	96.045	3,1	5,8	4,4
Educ. not def by lev.	84.317	93.490	5,2	5,6	5,4
Total	**1.613.391**	**1.663.351**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**

The table shows the number of 15-69 year-olds not attending courses after completing their highest education course. In addition, the table shows the relative distribution compared with all women and all men, respectively. Relatively more women than men have no education above basic school whereas a larger proportion of men have vocational and long higher education courses. More women than men have a shorter or medium higher education course.

Source: Statistiske efterretninger, Uddannelse og Kultur 1998:12 (Statistical data: Education and Culture).

Table 4. Women's and men's choices of higher education

	Short higher education courses				Medium higher education courses			
	Women number	Men number	Women %	Men %	Women Number	Men number	Women %	Men %
Public welfare	271	633	30,0	70,0	10	513	1,9	98,1
Technical	1.651	3.203	34,0	66,0	1.101	5.376	17,0	83,0
Transport	19	169	lo1	89,9	49	1.569	3,0	97,0
Food	1.943	426	82,0	18,0	115	34	77,2	22,8
Social	3.194	5.679	36,0	64,0	2.967	3.216	48,0	52,0
Agriculture	..	..	..	..	27	152	15,1	84,9
Music	515	242	68,0	32,0	349	196	64,0	36,0
Arts	1.113	123	90,0	10,0	3.725	1.590	70,1	29,9
Education	133	0	100,0	0,0	23.340	8.632	73,0	27,0
Health	950	83	92,0	8,0	11.633	1.151	91,0	9,0
Total	9.789	10.558	48,1	51,9	43.316	22.429	65,9	34,1

	Long higher education courses				Higher education courses total			
	Women number	Men number	Women %	Men %	Women number	Men number	Women %	Men %
Public welfare	1	78	1,3	98,7	282	1.224	18,7	81,3
Technical	4.829	8.526	36,0	64,0	7.581	17.165	30,6	69,4
Transport	1.411	1.202	54,0	46,0	1.479	2.940	33,5	66,5
Food	2.086	6.256	25,0	75,0	4.144	6.716	38,2	61,8
Social	12.547	14.730	46,0	54,0	18.708	23.625	44,2	55,8
Agriculture	252	84	75,0	25,0	279	236	54,2	45,8
Music	2.102	1.402	60,0	40,0	2.966	1.840	61,7	38,3
Arts	13.663	7.685	64,0	36,0	18.501	9.398	66,3	33,7
Education	960	412	70,0	30,0	24.433	9.044	73,0	27,0
Health	4.638	3.223	59,0	41,0	17.221	4.457	79,4	20,6
Total	42.489	43.658	49,3	50,7	95.594	76.645	55,5	44,5

The table shows the number of students at higher education institutions in October 1997. The short advanced courses are the 13th and 14th years of education, the medium courses are the 15th and 16th years and the long are the 17th and 18th years. Professions with the lowest percentage of women are at the top of the list.

Sources: Statistiske efterretninger: Uddannelse og Kultur 1998:7, 1998:11, 1998:13 (Statistical data: Education and Culture).

Table 5. Labour force and participation rate, 1976-1997

	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996	1997	1998
Whole population	5.064.000	5.123.000	5.115.000	5.146.000	5.250.000	5.251.121	5.294.860
in labour force	2.494.000	2.673.000	2.872.000	2.903.000	2.871.000	2.863.330	2.868.307
Labour force in % of whole population	49,2	52,2	56,1	56,4	54,7	54,5	54,2
Women in labour force as % of all women	39,6	45,8	50,4	51,6	49,7	49,4	49,5
Men in labour force as % of all men	59,1	58,7	62,0	61,4	59,8	59,3	58,9
Women in % Labour force	40,6	44,4	45,6	46,3	46,0	46,1	46,2
Men in % of labour force	59,4	55,6	54,4	53,7	54,0	53,9	53,8
			62,5				
Women's particip. rate	54,9	62,5	74,9	75,7	73,2	72,9	73,3
Men's particip. rate	81,2	78,9	85,9	84,0	82,2	81,7	81,6
Total particip. rate	67,9	70,7	80,5	79,9	77,8	77,4	77,5

Due to changes in labour force statistics in 1984, the figures before and after are not directly comparable.
"Labour force" includes self-employed, employees and unemployed. Outside the labour force are children, students, early retirement and retirement pensioners. The participation rate shows the number of people in the labour force between 16-66 years in % of the total population between 16 and 66 years.

Source: Danmarks Statistisk ti-årsoversigter 1986, 1996 and 1998 (Statistical ten-year reviews).

Table 6. The gender divided labour market, 1997

	Employed in industry number	Women In % of industry	Men in % of industry	Women In % of all	Men in % of all
Construction	156.595	9,8	90,2	0,6	5,3
Energy and water	17.810	21,0	79,0	0'1	0,5
Agriculture, fishing and quarrying	120.590	22,1	77,9	1,0	3,5
Transport, post and telecommunication	178.098	26,7	73,3	1,8	4,9
Industry	476.052	31,6	68,4	5,6	12,2
Retail trade, hotels and restaurants	478.487	42,8	57,2	7,7	10,3
Financial services	296.343	46,0	54,0	5,1	6,0
Activity not stated	13.882	55,0	45,0	0,3	0,2
Public and personal services		67,0	33,0	23,4	11,5
All employed	2.669.658	45,6	54,4	45,6	54,4

The table shows women's and men's percentages of employment in the particular industry and in % of all employed. The industries with the lowest number of women are at the top of the list. The table shows that 70.4% of the labour force works in industries dominated by women and men, respectively. 9. 1 % of women and 26.4% of men work in typical male professions, whereas 23.4% of women and 11.5% of men work in industries with women accounting for over 60% of the labour force.

Source: Danmarks Statistisk ti-årsoversigt 1998 (Statistical ten-year review).

Table 7. Women's and men's personal incomes, 1993-1997

Year	Municip. Women %	Municip. Men %	State Women %	State Men %	Private Women %	Private Men %
1993	85,4	100	87,8	100	..	
1994	86,6	100	88,3	100	73,6	100
1995	85,9	100	88,1	100	75,7	100
1996	86,3	100	89,7	100	76,4	100
1997	85	100	88,7	100	..	..

Women's incomes in % of men's incomes. Monthly pay excluding nuisance bonus.

Sources: 1993-figures from Danmarks Statistik: Statistikservice: Indkomst, forbrug og priser 1994:18+20. Other figures from Løn & Indkomst 1996:3, 1996:5, 1997:3A, 1998:1, 1998:2 og 1999:2. Nyt fra Danmarks Statistik 1998, nr. 295, nr. 424 og nr. 470 (1993-figures from Danmarks Statistik: Statistical service: Incomes, consumption and prices. Other figures from Wages & Incomes. News from Danmarks Statistik).

Table 8. Average number of women and men on leave, 1994-1997

Year	**1994** Women	**1994** Men	**1994** Women %	**1995** Women	**1995** Men	**1995** Women %
Childcare	30.938	2.668	92.1	38.520	3.615	91.4
Educational	8.482	3.789	69.1	22.986	9.516	70.7
Sabbatical	1.976	807	71.0	4.680	2.799	62.6
On leave total	41.396	7.264	85.1	66.187	15.930	80.6
Year	**1996** Women	**1996** Men	**1996** Women %	**1997** Women	**1997** Men	**1997** Women %
Childcare	28.326	2.253	92.6	20.635	1.593	92.8
Educational	22.672	8.740	72.2	17.872	6.010	74.8
Sabbatical	684	314	68.5	395	204	65.9
On leave total	51,682	11,308	82.1	38,902	7,806	83.3

Sources: Statistiske efterretninger: Arbejdsmarked 1997:14, 1996:33 og 1998:14 (Statistical data: Labour market).

Table 9. Women's and men's unemployment, 1980-1998

Year	Women %	Men %
1980	7,6	6,5
1982	10,0	9,7
1984	11,7	8,8
1986	10,0	6,1
1988	10,3	7,3
1990	11,3	8,4
1992	12,9	10,0
1994	13,6	11,0
1996	9,9	7,8
1997	8,3	5,8
1998	7,9	5,5

Registered unemployed women and men in % of labour force.

Sources: Statistisk tiårsoversigt 1989, 1996, Statistiske efterretninger: Arbejdsmarked 1997:4, 1998:2 og 1999:4 (Statistical ten-year review, Statistical data: Labour market).

Table 10. Women managers, 1983-1996

	Government		Municipalities		Private sector	
	Managers	Top manag.	Managers	Top manag.	Managers	Top manag.
1983	9	3	12	1	6	3
1984	10	3	13	2	6	3
1985	11	3	13	2	8	3
1986	11	4	13	2	8	4
1987	10	3	13	3	9	4
1988	13	5	14	4	9	4
1989	17	5	15	5	11	5
1990	19	7	16	6	12	5
1991	19	7	16	5	13	4
1992	21	7	17	6	14	5
1996	20	10	20	8	-	-

Managers, including step 38 on the wage scale: head of department, ambassador, principal (and deputy principal), assistant director, engineering manager, headmaster/mistress, forest supervisor, customs inspector (and deputy customs inspector). Top management: permanent secretaries and under secretaries.

Source: Danmarks Statistik 1998

Comments made by Danish non-governmental organizations

Women's Council in Denmark

Women's Council in Denmark is happy to have the opportunity to comment on the Danish Government's 5th report. It gives a comprehensive and honest picture of the situation with respect to equal opportunities between women and men and of the problems that have not yet been solved. However, Women's Council in Denmark is of the opinion that in several areas there is a lack of will to turn policy into action – violence against women and trafficking in women are examples of these areas.
With regard to general comments we refer to our comments on the 4th report. However, there is reason to emphasise that the fall in unemployment figures does not correspond to an equivalent increase in employment, which means that a large number of people are not registered as unemployed, but live on other forms of transfer incomes.

Article 2.
Equal opportunities between women and men are not secured by the Danish Constitution, but by other legislation. In connection with the ongoing Danish debate about a revision of the Constitution, Women's Council in Denmark has suggested that equal opportunities between women and men be incorporated in the Constitution so that it shows that equal opportunities are one of the fundamental principles of Danish society.

Article 3.
Gender mainstreaming has not been carried through in the ministries' treatment of parliamentary bills. It is still only a strategy widely discussed, and we have not yet seen any concrete results of the strategy in connection with an evaluation of parliamentary bills.

Article 5.
Young women complain of suppression of women. In Denmark, recent years have seen the publishing of books and public meetings where young women criticise the picture of the ideal woman current in our society. Women write personal accounts which show that they do not feel respected and on the same level as men when it comes to dignity and equality between women and men. They emphasise women's economic independence, political, educational and family rights as significant advances, but criticise the female image established through the increased sexualisation in our society. The entertainment programmes on the TV channels show female sex symbols, radio programmes offer silicone breasts, and pornography is increasingly dominating the public space. The picture of women presented by TV pornography shows women as willing sex objects for the excesses of men, and the picture of men is equally aggressive. The use of force and violence against women is turned into entertainment. Stereotype female images are emerging with renewed strength, and young women feel their self-view and

men's opinion of women affected negatively. As an indicator of the seriousness of the problem we have seen a growth in eating disorders – anorexia and bulimia. The study shows that 29% of girls at the age of 14-24 have problems that border on eating disorders.

Article 6.

Trafficking in foreign women for prostitution and for the sex industry in general is a fact in Denmark, and the number of foreign prostitutes is increasing. Denmark has still no law prohibiting the importation of women from other countries for prostitution in Denmark. Police efforts with regard to investigating cases of trafficking in women for prostitution have been sparse, and very few cases are brought before the law courts.

We consider trafficking in women for prostitution as a violation of human rights. This means that we consider the women involved as victims, not as criminals, and this applies regardless of whether or not the women knew that they were going to work in the sex industry. The women exposed to this trafficking are caught in a situation of exploitation by the men behind them, and therefore it is not in this context relevant to distinguish between voluntary and forced prostitution.

As victims of human rights violations these women need special support, for instance, in the form of food, accommodation and psychological advice and protection. Furthermore, the women must be given protection so that they can testify as witnesses in legal proceedings against the men responsible for their exploitation. Women who are prepared to stand up as witnesses should be offered temporary residence permits instead of being expelled from the country.

With regard to prosecution we find that a precise definition of the trafficking in human beings should be formulated, which makes it a criminal act – even though the victim has consented. Establishing a case for prosecution requires effective investigations, and we find that a special police unit should be established consisting of both female and male personnel in order to raise the level of investigation and ensure that criminals are prosecuted.

In the long term the major task is to fight the causes of the growing trafficking in women: poverty and the lack of opportunities in their native countries. In the short term we believe that – through international co-operation with the EU, the European Council and the UN – Denmark should participate in support for information campaigns in the countries the women come from – such campaigns have proved to be effective – and support programmes to rehabilitate women who have been exposed to trafficking in women. Women's NGOs in the women's native countries can play an important role in this context.

Article 7.
Top positions in the public sector are dominated by men. In municipalities and counties only 13.3% of women are employed in top executive positions despite the fact that 77% of the staff are women. The proportion of female top management positions in central government is also very low – only 10% of the managers are women and there are no female heads of departments in the ministries. In universities only 7% of the professors are women.

Article 9.
Women who flee from their native countries owing to gender-based violence or persecution should be ensured the right to asylum in Denmark. The Danish practice of dealing with asylum cases does not ensure sufficient examination of the gender-specific motives for fleeing, and gender-specific guidelines concerning the treatment of asylum cases should be introduced.

Article 11.
The lack of equal payment is still a heavy problem. In spite of the legislation on equal pay great differences still exist between women and men. There is a need for developing tools for determining exactly what is meant by work of equal value, with a view to revaluing women's qualifications. The labour market parties, who make collective agreements have not been sufficiently competent to bridge the wage gap. Collective agreements should be subjected to a gender-proving. We fear that the introduction of new wage systems which include qualification supplements, decentralised wage setting and individual wage negotiations may lead to further wage differences. On the private labour market there is not sufficient openness about wage conditions. In connection with the new governmental policy for gender equality, the Board set up to deal with complaints about sex discrimination has not been given the right to get the necessary wage information from the employers.

Women's working environment. The high rate of participation by women in the labour market is a positive factor for women's health. Studies show that women working full-time and part-time have a lower mortality rate than women working at home. It is a myth that the high participation rate is the cause of women's health problems. The problem rather lies in the absence of equal opportunities in the labour market and the absence of gender perspective in the working environment. The women's labour market is characterised by job insecurity, heavy work pressure, physical and psychological stress, for instance, the nursing and care sector.

Article 12.

One of the areas we consider to have been neglected in Danish health policy is the impact of harmful substances in the external environment. A number of chemically produced hormone-like substances are produced and emitted. This may have a harmful effect on women's health and on the fertility of women and men – the long-term effects have not been studied. In other cases, the effects have been documented. This applies to the strongly carcinogenic substance, dioxin, which can be found in food and is thus absorbed by the human body where it accumulates in fatty tissue. Dioxin can be found in breast milk, and through breast feeding the substance is transferred to the next generation. The harmful substances can be found in agricultural pesticides, plasticisers, detergents, etc. It is to be feared that these substances have an influence on various types of cancer, for instance, breast cancer. Breast cancer is by far the most frequent type of cancer in Denmark, and the rate of mortality is high. Only 53% of the women who received the diagnosis in the period 1987-91 were alive at the end of 1996.
This disorder has become more frequent: In 1996 breast cancer was diagnosed in 3,480 women compared to 1000 fewer 15 years previously. Naturally, it is important to ensure that women with breast cancer receive prompt and effective treatment, but concurrently it is important that research into the causes and development of breast cancer should be carried out. Therefore, the Women's Council in Denmark demands more funds for research in the field of environmental medicine. In Denmark, the birth rate is stagnant at the same time as the number of abortions has fallen. These are indications of reduced fertility, and this may be due to the harmful effects of hormone-like substances in the environment.

As the total effects of the substances to which we are exposed are unknown, we demand the labelling of products that contain hormone-like substances so that the consumers at least have the possibility of avoiding such products. At the same time we demand that the government gives higher priority to the effort to remove toxic production.

Copenhagen, 15 May 2000

Aase Rieck Sørensen
Head of office

Randi Theil Nielsen
Information officer

Women's Council in Denmark (the former National Council of Women in Denmark) is the major umbrella organisation for women's NGOs in Denmark fighting for women's rights and influence. The Women's Council has 49 affiliated organisations with a total of more than 1 million people behind. Since 1899, when Women's Council was established, women's organisations and other organisations dealing with gender issues have worked together in order to stand stronger in the common struggle for women's human rights nationally and internationally. Today trade unions, political parties, gender-researchers, religious and humanitarian associations, refugee women's groups among others are members.

DANISH WOMEN's SOCIETY

The Danish Women's Society (DWS) is pleased to be given the opportunity to comment on the Danish Government's Report on the Implementation of the CEDAW Convention. We find the National Report in general a fair and comprehensive description of the position of women in Denmark and the policies and measures implemented to further the advancement of women.

Therefore, our comments will be limited to the following points which we feel will help to further the advancement of women in the Denmark.

With few legislative inequalities remaining in Denmark, DWS is pleased to note the government commitment to bringing about de facto equality by emphasizing changes in attitude through communication and information. Also change in focus from women as victims of discrimination to women as indispensable partners in economic and social development is to be commended as it highlights women as their own agents. Likewise the increasing focus on the role of men in equality work is a step forward. Until gender equality is seen as a win-win situation for both women and men, the final goal will never be achieved.

Article 3: National Policy

With regard to the Government strategy of mainstreaming gender equality into all political initiatives, DWS is in agreement with the report's statement regarding the need for further operationalisation and additional methods for achieving mainstreaming.

However, no mention is made of the importance of maintaining a focus on women's core issues of concern in the process of mainstreaming gender equality. If mainstreaming efforts become non-specific "integration of gender issues," especially in the absence of women in influential, decision-making positions to promote women's specific concerns, DWS fears that women's concerns may be lost. Mainstreaming, however laudable, must not become an excuse for ceasing to address women's particular concerns. There will be a need for pecial attention to women's concerns for some time to come in the form of research, pilot projects, consultations with women's representatives and monitoring of results of mainstreaming efforts.

Article 4 Equality Bodies and Temporary Means
DWS is particularly happy to note Parliament's recommendations to support efforts to improve reconciliation between working life and family life. One of DWS' concerns in the 4th Danish Report to CEDAW was that the work for equal opportunities for women and men would be seen only within a context of income, law and position in the labour market. If our fears were unfounded, we can only be pleased.

With regard to the establishment of new institutional mechanisms on gender equality, DWS is happy too that the new Minister for Gender Equality can look forward to the support and assistance of a departmental unit and an increased budget for equality work. DWS had earlier in the process of revising the National Machinery expresssed concern that this might not be the case.

Non-governmental Organisations
The DWS is pleased that co-operation with NGOs is a priority for the Danish Government. The report acknowledges the role of women's NGOs and their contribution to the field of equal rights of women, and the Danish Government is to be commended for its efforts to involve NGOs in its work for the advancement of women.

However, DWS would like to call attention to the fact that this work, done by NGOs on a volunteer basis but as professionally as possible in order to have impact, is becoming increasingly difficult for Danish women today.

Most Danish women are working full-time or more in a combination of labour market and family obligations, of which women still have the greatest share. They have little time for volunteer work. This situation must be acknowledged and appropriate financial assistance provided to women's organisations for not only specific activities but also for daily administrative costs. The costs of international networking are also prohibitive for many women's organisations today.

These considerations are particularly important in light of the need in Denmark today for a popularisation of common understanding in the populace of the continued need for monitoring of rights won (and often taken for granted) as well as for efforts to ensure further advancements for women both in Denmark and internationally.

Article 6 Special Issues
DWS can agree with the Government on its choice of special initiatives to meet the needs of ethnic women in Denmark and to address the issues of violence and trafficking in women. DWS sees these issues as calling for special attention in Denmark and much more needs to be done.

Violence and Rape
The number of battered women trying to get into a shelter is increasing. The result is that

every third woman is turned away because of lack of rooms in shelters, according to the Annual Report from the National Crisis Centres in Denmark.

Local counselling centres for victims of violence set up by local police authorities counsel mostly people of both sexes who have been exposed to street violence, armed robbery and threats etc. Statistics on violence in these centres do not specify the types of violence. However, in our experience few victims of wife battering seem to turn to these counselling centres.

The DWS is pleased with the Government's grant of DKK 20 million for a 4 year pilot project for reception centres for victims of rape. We would like to mention that the DWS intends to keep a close eye on the development of this project. We think it will be necessary to pressurize the counties to carry out the mandate from the Government. One of our branches has already started on this work.

Trafficking in Women

The DWS is very concerned about the problem of Trafficking in Women in Denmark.

The Report says in its first paragraph that"Trafficking in women might be punishable under the Penal Code, prohibiting transport out of the country of persons with the purpose of sexual exploitation, as well as under the Immigration Act prohibiting import and smuggling of people." From the text of the report only the export of women and illegal import or smuggling of people is covered by legislation. However, the human rights aspects of trafficking i.e. women being recruited and transported within or across borders by means of threat, violence or deception, or working and/or living under slave-like conditions appear not to be covered. Furthermore in a memorandum from 1995 concerning trafficking in women (J.nr. 1995-945-330) the Ministry of Justice specifically stated that there is no adequate Danish legislation covering trafficking in women in the country.

As far back as 1995 and also in 1998 NGOs have worked with the problem. In 1995 there was a public hearing where a panel including Members of Parliament discussed the problem. The hearing was organised by the NGO KULU - Women in Development - who also published a report on the problem. Furthermore, a Network on Trafficking was formed in 1997 and they held a public hearing in November 1998 - Bodies Across Borders - which focussed on Thai women in Denmark.

In its response (Aug. 1999) to the Questionnaire to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly the Government talks about the initiative which also figures in its CEDAW Report 2000, i.e. "The Minister of Justice……in connection with trafficking in women." So far we are not aware of any results or any further legislation.

We would like to mention the first initiative which was taken by the Equality Council. We

think that the discussion was focussed mainly on the Eastern European countries. It could be said that the Conference itself was a catalysator in that the media had covered it intensely and a few parties who attended promised to take the matter up in Parliament. These parties are trying to push the issue, but results seem to be long in appearing. One interesting point was it appeared that the collection of data on this subject by one of the Police Units had been discontinued. One speaker from the Police Department even said that he did not think trafficking was a problem in Denmark.

It is said that the issue has been high on the Danish Agenda. We feel this is not enough. Considering the fact that it is now 17 years since Denmark ratified the CEDAW Convention, which includes Article 6 on trafficking in women, it could have been expected that the issue had been given higher priority. The report mentions the active role that Denmark is playng in the international field. Of course, this is very commendable, but it does not seem to have had much effect on the internal situation.

Article 7 Political Rights and Participation

Paragrapit 2, line 1 and 2:

"While gender imbalances are most unequal.....they are almost even in Parliament."

The DWS notes that from the statistics in the report there has been an increase in women representatives in Parliament from 33.3% to 37% from 1994 to 1998. This is very commendable. However, from our point of view this difference is 13%, and until we reach percentages closer to 50/50 is not "almost even" representation of men and women. We have some way to go yet and must increase our efforts to reach our goal, and also continue to ensure that we do not fall back.

Article 9 Citizenship

The number of battered women applying for residence permits on the grounds of violence has decreased each year since the adoption of the amendment of the Aliens Act. The reason given for this is that few obtain residence permits as most women are not able to meet the requirements, of which there are several, besides proving they have been exposed to violence. They do not dare to apply if they are not given assurances from a lawyer that they can obtain a residence permit. Therefore, the very few women who apply for residence permits do not reflect the true number of battered women without residence permits in their own right.

Article 10 Education

The description of the education system seen from a gender perspective is by and large a realistic and fair description. It points out the areas where gender equality has not been achieved. The education system is still gender segregated when it comes to the choice of subjects and courses taken by girls and boys, women and men. This applies to all levels of education. When it comes to positions of leadership women are still outnumbered by men. Even in institutions where the number of women students and women ph.d's is increasing, it is not reflected in the recruiting of university teaching and research staff. In educating researchers the universities do not allow for the fact that the age at which a young woman

wants to start a university career as a researcher coincides with the time that she is about to or perhaps already has started a family.

One major obstacle in the work for gender equality in the education system is the absence of political dedication to this problem. It is no longer an issue in the political debate on education, and consequently it is not an issue in education institutions. On the contrary, in institutions where girls and women are in the majority or close to making up 50% of the students/pupils/staff (universities, higher secondary education, lower schools) it has become acceptable to consider this a major problem, something that must be changed to prevent the academic standard from dropping. If this trend continues or becomes even more prevalent, it may very well become counterproductive to all good intentions of gender equality.

Article 11 The Situation in the Labour Market

In general the report on this article is good. However, under" Harmonisation of Family Life and Working Life" as regards child-care facilities the DWS wishes to point out that there is still a lack of these facilities - especially for children between 6 months and 1 year. This forces a number of women to prolong their maternity leave with a minimum additional 6 months of extended parental leave, occasionally against their wishes.

Furthermore, the inadequate number of child-care facilities leads to crowded and unsatisfactory conditions for children.

Article 12 Health Problems and Provisions

DWS would like to stress that considering motherhood a societal function must not result in a narrowing of women's personal freedom. While both the action plan on abortion and the health promotion programme are woman-specific, they often involve voluntary compulsion as it is the embryo's/child's interests which are looked after and not the woman's.

In recent years the maternity wards of many small provincial hospitals have been closed. The fact that maternity centres and expertise are disappearing from local communities is a great disadvantage for women who then often have lengthy transport distances when the birth has started. In Denmark there is a statutory right to choose the option of homebirth, but it is not followed up by information about the possibility by general practitioners and it is often very difficult to get a midwife to come to a homebirth. If it is to be genuine option, this right must be accompanied by information.

With regard to fertility treatment, DWS, as also mentioned in the 1996 report to CEDAW, would like to oppose the splitting up of motherhood which has become a possibility with new technology (i.e the genetic mother who donates the egg, the biological mother who bears the child and the social mother who raises the child). As the consequences of artificial fertilization are totally unclear DWS wishes the following to be prohibited:
- fertilization of human eggs in laboratories for the purpose of basic research
- freezing of unfertilized human eggs

- unrestricted donation of unfertilized eggs.

These measures, if allowed, will not contribute to protecting women's self-determination over their own bodies.

Denmark has signed the European Council Bioethic Convention. This Convention sets down general lines for how doctors should deal with donated eggs, with embryos and with the further development of the method of treatment. This means that fertility is looked at as an abstract phenomenon but does not say anything about women themselves. Therefore, we need to keep a watchful eye on developments.

With regard to women's right to abortion, DWS finds that it would be more appropriate to operate with the so-called "general abortion quotient", where the figure for 1996 was 14.4%. The highest general abortion is for 1975 when it was 23.7% This clearly shows that the rate is decreasing in Denmark.

DWS finds that abortion must be accepted as the last resort it is by definition. There is no alternative to abortion and no research documents that Danish women fail to show great responsibility in their use of the right to abortion. Therefore, DWS wishes no limitation of the present legislation regarding abortion. However, we regret the repeal of the law obliging counties to operate contraception clinics.

DANISH WOMEN's SOCIETY

May 2000

Padmini Christiansen

Karen Hallberg
President

Padmini Christiansen
International Committee

Contributions from: Nina Ellinger, Leslie Larsen, Britta Mogensen, Bente Holm Nielsen and Lene Pind

Masculine Forum of Denmark

Umbrellaorganisation of Danish Men's Organizations

Comments on the CEDAW and on the 5th Danish Periodic Report of Implementation of the CEDAW

Masculine Forum in Denmark appreciates the invitation to comment on the Danish Governments 5th report to the CEDAW. It is one of several attempts to integrate men as active participants and subjects in the Danish and international debates and decision-making processes on gender equality and anti-discrimination.

Comments on the CEDAW

Aims of the Convention

Masculine Forum of Denmark finds the CEDAW problematic in several ways. First of all, we find it problematic that the CEDAW only aims to eliminate discrimination against women. The convention is blind to any discrimination against men that might arise, even if it emerges as an indirect effect of the anti-discrimination programs that are implied to honor the aims of the CEDAW (Article 4).

Secondly, the CEDAW defines discrimination very widely and independent of settings. The fact that one sex feels discriminated against in a given time in one part of the world should not automatically legitimize discrimination of the other sex in another part of the world in another historic period.

Definitions of Gender Equality

Although men and women in Denmark disagree - both with each other and internally - on many gender issues, there is a general consensus in Denmark that it is not possible to define gender equality. It seems impossible to determine, whether a gender imbalance in a given forum is caused by discrimination, or by the fact that men and women have different priorities in life.

It has never been determined whether the stated discrimination of women is due to certain feminine vulnerabilities or "only" due to inherited structural mechanisms that favor men. Hence, it is not clear, whether the real aim of anti-discrimination efforts - like the CEDAW - is to protect women from men and compensate for women's relative weakness, or the aim is to ensure equal treatment and opportunities for men and women.

Masculine Forum in Denmark does not see women as weaker than men. Moreover, dismounting the structural mechanisms that cause discrimination of women will not only liberate women fully. It will also allow men to be liberated from their gender specific roles.

In practice equality is measured numerically. The distribution of men and women in different areas of life is used as an indicator of equality level. However - if a bias can be observed, it is not necessarily a sign of discrimination. The general differences in men and women's free choices might simply cause it.

Therefore, it is necessary in the application of gender equality - affirmative action, for example - to analyze whether a statistical difference in the representation of men and women in a given field is due to discrimination, or it is a consequence of free personal choices.

Temporary Special Measures

The temporary special measures mentioned in the CEDAW (article 4) are temporary in the sense that they should be cancelled when the objectives of equality have been fulfilled. But since it is not possible to define gender equality, it is not possible to measure it, hence define the circumstances under which it occurs. Even if the objectives can be regarded as fulfilled, canceling the measures might be understood as an invitation to re-discriminate. Therefor it is not likely that cancellation will ever occur.

Comment on the 5th Danish Periodic Report of Implementation of CEDAW

Constitution and Legislation

As stated in the Danish Governments 5th Report, the Danish constitution embodies the principle of equal treatment of men and women (comments on Article 2) while the CEDAW aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women only. The CEDAW leaves the impression that the UN either denies the existence of discrimination against men or does not mind it.

Masculine Forum of Denmark prefers the Danish gender neutral formulation. Focusing on only one gender is not appropriate in the pursuit of gender equality. It might even increase the gaps.

Equality and Democracy

Masculine Forum of Denmark sees a conflict between, on the one hand, the aim of equal gender participation in the decision-making process in the society, and, on the other hand, democracy where the composition of parliament is a result of free elections. We recommend that the composition of parliament reflect the choices made by the voters.

Opportunities in Family Life

Masculine Forum of Denmark regrets that the Danish 5th Report treats family life as a topic subordinate of the labor market, and not as a separate chapter. Most of the changes in men and women's attitudes, norms and values that are needed in the process of gender equality, take place in the family.

The Danish 5th Report states that *"men and woman [in Denmark] have the same right, obligations, and opportunities in all areas of society"* (5th Report, comment on Article 1).

This is not quite correct. In Denmark men and women do not share equal rights with respect to their children. About 46 % of the Danish children are born out of wedlock. The unmarried father can not obtain custody over his child unless the mother signs a form that allows joint custody (Danish Custody Law, § 5).

The Danish Custody Law was changed in 1995. In a response to the government report suggesting the changes, the Danish Equal Status Council recommenced automatically shared

custody over children born out of wedlock, if the parents were living together. This was, however, not implemented in the law.

Recently, in the spring 2000, the question of automatic custody to unmarried fathers was brought up again in the Danish Folketing. Now, in an official statement, the Council has changed its 1995-opinion. It recommends no changes in the present legislation on custody rights. In other words, the Council regards the unmarried mother's right to sole custody as coherent with the child's best interest. If the Bill is passed in the Danish Folketing in it's present form, unmarried mothers will still be able to chose sole custody with no questions asked.

Masculine Forum of Denmark agrees that the interest of the child should be the primordial interest in all situations. But we do not see a contradiction between the interest of the child and shared custody. We do, however, see a conflict between the interest of the child and the mother's present right to choose sole custody. Children born out of wedlock should enjoy the same privileges as children born in wedlock: Custodial relations to both parents. When joint custody is no longer in the best interest of the child, the joint custody situation allows for equal treatment of the parents in a trial. The child's future can thereby be decided according to an evaluation of parental abilities.

Masculine Forum in Denmark regrets that the Equal Status Council has changed its opinion. We find this maintenance of unequal standards in conflict with Article 5b in the CEDAW.

The issue of custody is not only a matter of discrimination of children and men in terms of access to custodial relations. Court decisions on custody favor mothers to an extent that does not reflect the children's interest. 37% of all children in Denmark experience living with only one of their parents - mostly their mothers - before they reach the age of eighteen. The Danish Social Research Institute has found, that the relatively few children raised by single fathers are significantly better off than children raised by single mothers (Social Research Institute, 1996).

The differences in men and women's opportunities with respect to their children have implications in most areas of civil life for both women and men. Caring for a child indeed influences the quality of life, the opportunities in the working life and the private economy (see below).

The Labor Market

Indeed all people should receive even pay for even work. But for many people in Denmark - especially women - normal wages are only a part of their income. A very large portion of the Danish Gross National Product covers other incomes such as unemployment pay, social aid, rent support and child aid. Some of these incomes - as well as the transfer of alimony and child support from men to women - are not included in the income statistics. Adding them will paint a more precise picture of the income distribution between men and women in Denmark.

All mothers in Denmark receive child aid. A father can only receive child aid if he has single custody. This only happens in very few cases, where the father has won a custody trial, the mother has given up custody voluntarily, or she has died.

Figure 1: Net Income for Single Parent With Two Children

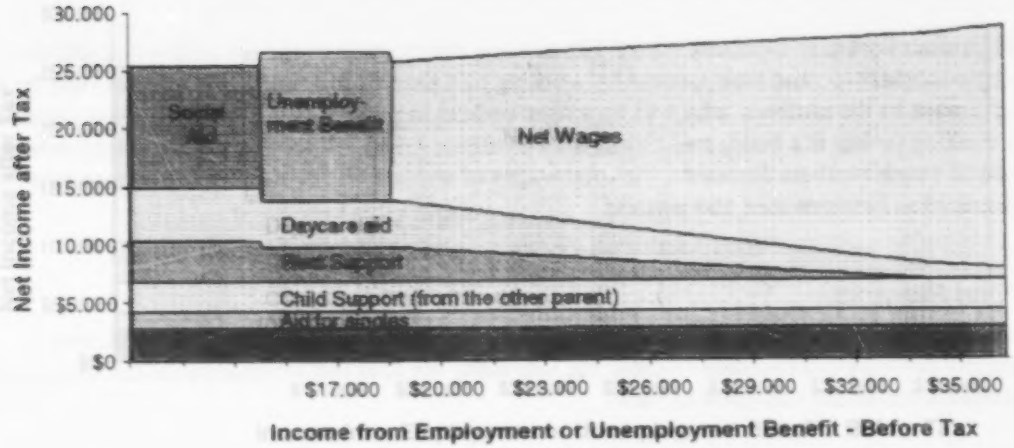

Figure 1: On top of child aid, child support from the other parent and possibly alimony, single parents in Denmark receive aid from several different social programs. The total sum is dependent on factors as personal income, number of children, children's age, rent level, size of flat, art of daycare and the other parent's income. The figure shows the accumulated net income for a single parent with two children 2 and 5 years of age. The rent is set to 500 $/month, with is not uncommon. The child support is at the minimum level - so if the father's income increases, the child support will also increase. All rates are from 2000 and the course of US$ is set to 800, - DKr.

Mothers living alone with their children receive social aid from several different programs. On top of the child aid and child support from the father, she can receive aid for single parent, rent support and daycare aid. All together the aids and supports for single parents with two children can accumulate to more than 15.000 US$ per year (see figure 1).

The level of net income for single mothers is also high compared to average wages. A single mother with two children has around 27.000 US $ per year after taxation, which corresponds to a gross income of approximately double this amount. This means, that after separation the mother and children can often be better off economically than the entire family - unless the father's wage is close to twice the average wage.

Many people in Denmark divorce each other *pro forma* in order to access the social aid earmarked for single parents. The municipalities and the parliament have tried to stop this traffic, but have not succeeded.

Some of the social aid to single parents, rent support and daycare aid, is income dependent to an extent, that the sum of social aids decrease in the same rate as the net wages increase. If she takes part time work, the net income might even decrease compared to the unemployment benefit level (see figure 1).

This means that single mothers are not able to raise their net income. They have no economic stimulus to work. Undoubtedly, this is the main reason for the very high unemployment rate among single parents, 35% (Social Research Institute, 1996).

Masculine Forum of Denmark would like to see a reformation of the aid policy that allows single mothers to raise their income by working part time or full time. This will not only be an advantage to the mothers, who will no longer be held in passive contribution. For the children a working parent is a better role model than an unemployed. Moreover, if the unemployment rate of single mothers decreases, the total wages of women will rise and balance the wage distribution between men and women.

Final Remarks

Masculine Forum of Denmark finds that rigid gender specific roles and structural forces in society not only discriminate women, but also men. We find that many legal, social and health statistics document this point of view.

The discrimination mechanisms become evident when addressing the problems in society with a gender specific approach. On both Danish and international level we recommend, that the female perspective in anti-discrimination work be supplied with a male perspective.

We find that mainstreaming this double perspective in all political institutions is necessary in order to fulfill the human rights convention as declared by the United Nations.